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MENTAL & MORAL EXCELLENCE AND HOW TO ATTAIN IT

MEMORIALS OF JOHN HESSEL.

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AND

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Memorials

OF

JOHN HESSEL

BY

JOSHUA PRIESTLEY.

Mental and Moral Excellence

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"I AM SURE THAT A YOUNG MAN MAY BE VERY MUCH WHAT HE PLEASES."—*Sir T. Fowell Buxton.*

Fourth Edition.

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

This volume is designed to supply a desideratum. We have several works admirably fitted to stimulate the young to self-culture, but guidance is needed as well as stimulus. How desirable that the aspirant should have access to the experience of one who has trodden the path on which he is entering, and is able to pronounce on the respective value of various mental and moral processes and habits! Here we have a record of the processes by which Mr. Hessel attained excellence. His experiences can scarcely fail to instruct, and his example is well fitted to stimulate. I have received numerous gratifying testimonies of the great service the work has already rendered.

Though the greater part of the volume was written before he was twenty-two, persons of maturer years may deem it not unworthy their attention.

The present edition has not only been thoroughly revised but re-written; and it is hoped the value of the work is considerably increased. The size and style of the book have been chosen with a view to make it a companion volume to the "Memorials of Eliza Hessel."

The renewal of intimate communion with my friend has repeatedly prompted me to appropriate the language of our laureate :

> "I would the great world grew like thee,
> Who grewest not alone in power
> And knowledge, but by year and hour
> In reverence and in charity."

J. P.

DONCASTER, MARCH 26TH, 1861.

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MEMORIALS

OF

JOHN HESSEL.

CHAPTER I.

The mental and moral features of Mr. Hessel, and the classes of persons for whom this memoir is deemed particularly suitable, specified.

WHO was John Hessel? He could boast no ancestral honours; occupied no elevated station; acquired no distinction in commerce, literature, or science. If only those who achieve a reputation attract your attention, courteous reader, you will remain contentedly ignorant of the subject of this biography.

If you read only for amusement; if the butterfly rather than the bee is your emblem; if you have no desire for self-improvement, this book will not suit your taste.

If, however, you delight to form acquaintance with a man possessed by the determination to make the best use of his powers; whose aspirations are directed to the acquisition of goodness and usefulness rather than of fame; whose views of excellence are comprehensive, and whose pursuit of it is intelligent, unintermitting, and successful, you will here find a meet companion.

If you are interested in observing mental and moral growth; in tracing the effect of varied disciplinary habits;

in gazing on the daily photograph of an earnest and sagacious mind, agreeable employment is furnished you in this volume.

If you entertain the notion that students are necessarily unpractical; that their views of life, however beautiful in words, can have no embodiment in deeds; that a love for books disqualifies for cordial activity, a perusal of this biography will convince you of error. John Hessel, though a devoted student, was a thoroughly practical man. He was in danger, in fact, of under-estimating pursuits which did not clearly promise practical results. Pedantry was his abhorrence; practical philosophy his delight.

If you love to witness Christianity not as a creed or formula but as a life; not as a noisy effervescent but as an inward law; not as sectarian partizanship, blind to all excellence outside its own little world, but as rejoicing in goodness in whomsoever seen; not as a selfish comfort-hunter, but as seeking with self-denying zeal to elevate and bless mankind, these pages will afford you gratification. John Hessel was an unostentatious but sound-hearted, large-hearted, warm-hearted Christian.

If you regard religious biography with aversion, convinced that religious experience, so called, is only "cant;" that whoever submits to the avowal of a creed or system by union with a Christian sect, thereby ingloriously manacles his mind, be persuaded to read these records with the candour you desire to see professing Christians exhibit towards sceptics. You will find that when John Hessel became a man, like another and far greater, he put away childish things. He looked on creeds and formularies and systems, not through the medium of inherited notions, but with the vision of a devout and earnest inquirer. He shunned not to avow unpopular opinions; or, when duty summoned, to pursue a course he knew would provoke displeasure. He sometimes erred by pushing his disregard

of prejudices to excess. Be his thinkings right or wrong, he was an independent thinker.

If you are a preacher, and prize hints that may help you to a better understanding of Divine truth, and a better method of enforcing it; that may conduct to broad views of the object of preaching, and stimulate to a more vigilant regard to its great end, such hints are here afforded.

If you are young, and wish the benefit of experience as to the formation of your habits; as to what constitutes true culture, and how that culture may be best secured, you will here find instruction.

With one exception the following forceful lines of Banks admirably describe the purpose that glowed in the soul of the subject of this biography. That exception relates to the objects of his benevolent regard. His aims took a far wider sweep than those of the poet. He lived not "for those who loved" him merely, but for those whom he never expected to love him, for he lived for all.

"I live for those who love me,
  Whose hearts are kind and true;
For the heaven that smiles above me,
  And awaits my spirit too:
For all human ties that bind me;
  For the task of God assigned me;
For the bright hopes left behind me;
  And the good that I can do.

I live to learn their story
  Who've suffered for my sake;
To emulate their glory,
  And follow in their wake:
Bards, patriots, martyrs, sages,
  The noble of all ages,
Whose deeds crowd History's pages
  And Time's great volume make.

I live to hold communion
  With all that is divine;
To feel there is a union
  'Twixt nature's heart and mine:

To profit by affliction,
  Reap truths from fields of fiction,
Grow wiser by conviction,
  And fulfil each grand design.

I live to hail that season
  By gifted minds foretold,
When men shall live by reason,
  And not alone for gold:
When man to man united,
  And every wrong thing righted,
The whole world shall be lighted,
  As Eden was of old.

I live for those who love me,
  For those who know me true;
For the heaven that smiles above me
  And awaits my spirit too:
For the cause that lacks assistance,
  For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the future in the distance,
  And the good that I can do."

CHAPTER II.

AT YORK. Parentage—Apprenticed to be a draper—Attends a theatre—Abandons it, and becomes a member of the Rev. James Parsons' church—Is recommended as a candidate for the Christian Ministry.

JOHN HESSEL was the first child of Benjamin and Hannah Hessel, then resident at Camblesforth, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He was born on the 16th of August, 1814. As he quitted the parental roof in his fifteenth year, when the next younger branch would be but six or seven, the family possess but scanty reminiscences of his youthful history. Happily the lack is largely supplied by himself. An autobiographical sketch forms part of an interesting correspondence he conducted with an intelligent and pious young lady. It is dated September 7, 1835.

"For the first eight years of my life I was the only son of two sober and industrious parents, whose constant care was to keep me from the contaminating influence of the world. My father at that time occupied a small farm in the neighbourhood of Selby, and as our house was at some distance from the town I was necessarily much alone, and found my juvenile amusements in the fields and woods. Although I attended the village school I took but little delight in the sports of my school-fellows. In general I preferred stealing to some favourite retreat with what book I could procure, and spending my leisure in the great temple of nature. I mention these things because my character has derived a peculiarity from these early associations. I acquired a deep and lasting relish for natural objects which forms one great ingredient in my happiness.

I remember in very early years holding an intercourse with inanimate objects, which none but a true lover of nature can understand. I regard it as one of my greatest earthly blessings that my mind was thus disciplined. I was not only preserved from the degrading influence which often reigns in the village school, but I read the book of nature for myself, and it has greatly assisted me in reading other books. You will smile when I tell you of what my library consisted. Perhaps I cannot mention all I read, but I remember that Baxter's Saint's Rest, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, with some Wesleyan Magazines, were amongst the number. I love to dwell upon these early scenes. They occupy a hallowed place in my remembrance, and constrain me to acknowledge the care and goodness of that Being who was the 'guide of my youth.'

"When I was about seven my father removed to the farm he now occupies (near Tadcaster,) which is considerably larger than the one he left. Through care and industry he has been enabled to rise into comfortable circumstances. Although possessing himself only the elements of education, he was anxious to have his son 'a good scholar.' Perhaps you may form some idea of what that term signified in his estimation when I tell you he designed me for a farmer. I had the misfortune, however, to fall into the hands of bad schoolmasters who knew nothing of intellectual culture. I have often smiled to think of the lofty standards by which they measured the attainments of their pupils. To commit to memory Murray's Abridgment was regarded as the very climax of grammatical learning, and to go through Walkingame's Arithmetic was a prodigious effort. The happy lad who could make these splendid acquisitions was thought to be as clever as the master. One school however was an exception—Mr. Richardson's of Market-Weighton. There I am happy to say I reaped immense advantage. I shall

never forget the delight with which I first engaged in the studies of geography and history. A class for English composition contributed much to nerve my mental energies. After leaving this place I learnt the elements of Latin, which I have found of great use.

"My father now wished me to remain at home and assist him. But I soon grew tired of farming. A difficulty rose as to the trade or profession I should be. I had a decided preference for the pursuits of literature, but had no friend to direct me. Sometimes I thought of one thing and then of another. Ultimately I was induced to fix upon the business of a draper, chiefly through the prospects of temporal advancement held out to me, which were very tempting. I went apprentice to Messrs. Day of York, and was now thrown into the midst of a bustling city. O, I do feel for a young man who is taken from the quiet scenes of life and exposed to the fascinating dangers of a place like York. Many an unhappy spirit has been ruined by such a change, and I regard it as almost a miracle of mercy that I did not fall a victim to the pernicious influences surrounding me. Although I sunk deep into depravity of heart I was preserved from many of the grosser forms of vice.

"I had access to the large circulating library. From this I absolutely devoured books. For weeks together I have sat up until two or three in the morning, and thus debilitated a constitution usually strong and healthy. I can now realize the reluctant feeling with which I retired to rest when the deep tones of the cathedral bell rung through the silent streets of the city, and the sickly emotion with which I arose from feverish repose when duties summoned me.

"For a long time my books were my only friends. You cannot, my dear C——, know what I mean when I tell you that amid the population of a crowded city I felt myself alone. Not a single being did I meet with to whom

I could confide my feelings. I have oft repeated those lines of Kirke White until the tear has started, and every fibre of my heart throbbed with indignation against a cold-hearted world:

> "Who were my friends in youth? The midnight fire,
> The silent moonbeam, and the starry choir."

"I had not been long in York when I went one evening to the theatre. But for the grace of God that would have been a fatal night in my history. The play I witnessed was the tragedy of Jane Shore. During the whole time my mind was in an ecstacy. This appeared a realization of the ideal world in which I had lived, and the visions which had flitted across my fancy now started into reality. From that time I became an attender of the theatre. In that retreat of licentiousness and vice I have squandered much money that might have been employed in furnishing the means of intellectual improvement. Those can have no idea of the strength of the dramatic mania who have never felt it. My attendance upon the theatre procured me companions who, although more intelligent than my shop-mates, exercised a very unhappy influence upon my character. I was within a hair's breadth of infidelity. I have reason to bless God I never sunk into that horrid gulf. I never could close my eyes against Eternity. Often did its awful image rise up before me, and shake its terrors over my soul. In this condition I remained for three years, seeking happiness but unable to find it. I grasped at the phantom, but it constantly fled from me."

A loose scrap of paper contains a record too interesting to be omitted, and which will find an appropriate place here.

"I remember well one evening, when in this state of mind, I felt disposed to take a solitary ramble in the suburbs of the city, and indulge in the meditations which had so completely taken possession of my soul. I was

passionately fond of the scenes of nature, and perhaps on this account God was pleased to make them the first means of enlightening and impressing my dark and careless spirit. The verdant fields, the luxuriant landscape, and the shadowing grove, have ever had charms for my mind, which I cannot better express than in the language of the poet :

'And steals with resistless witchery the soul.'

Indeed I have ever been one of the most devóted worshippers in the great temple of Nature, and many a time do I remember when my feelings have been harrowed by long contact with the iron spirit of the world, I have found peace in the silent streets which surround the ancient city of York. The torrent of passion has been stemmed, the throbbings of the sensitive spirit have ceased, the irritation of wounded pride and the pang of disappointed hope have been soothed by the soft beauties of nature and the sublime serenity of an evening sky.

"It was to indulge my favourite propensities that one beautiful Sabbath evening I issued from the narrow streets and confined atmosphere of a crowded city. It was near the hour of evening worship, and multitudes were flocking to the house of God. I confess I could not but envy these people as they pressed with cheerful eagerness to their respective sanctuaries. Although the temple of God had not sufficient charms to attract my wayward feet, I felt convinced, and the conviction sunk like lead into my soul, that these people, in many instances at least, were in possession of that unknown happiness after which I had so long but vainly panted. And although my abominable pride tempted me to despise their weakness, I almost wished an exchange of circumstances. I remember, as I passed by the church of an eminent minister, to have been peculiarly attracted with the singing of the commencing hymn of evening worship."

"You will imagine perhaps," the letter proceeds, "that

I was suddenly rescued from this state of awful recklessness. Such, however, was not the case. If ever any one's conversion was gradual, mine was. One day, through the conversation of a pious young man, I was led to read 'Watts on the Mind.' It deeply interested me, and although it produced no religious impression I began to see that the investigation of truth must be a source of the most exalted pleasure. I had previously read history, dramas, and works of fiction: now I applied myself to philosophy. Bacon and Locke were my favourite authors, and I found myself in a new world. My study of these books produced a seriousness of disposition, and I soon made a practice of regularly attending church. My conduct was also much reformed, and by some might be thought religious. My heart, alas, was unchanged. Although my former sins had lost their charm, and the gay dreams in which my fancy had revelled were vanished, my condition was as dangerous as ever. My sin was now of a more subtle and intellectual character. My mind was often startled by doubts. I believe that what was chiefly instrumental in preserving me from scepticism, was the remembrance of counsels and principles instilled into my mind by maternal love. Whenever it was suggested that religion was a farce, a dream of enthusiasm, there rose up in memory, in opposition to this horrid thought, a mother's counsel—a mother's conduct—a mother's prayers. O that I could give you an adequate idea of the resistless energy of female influence! There was something in my mother's conduct which convinced me that religion must be a reality. Amid all my doubts that conviction haunted me. It mingled with all the operations of my judgment. I could not rid myself of it.

"I remember, one beautiful evening, taking a walk into the country. It was in the month of July, when nature had arrayed herself in her richest robe. I was sauntering

along one of my favourite retreats, musing on the mysterious nature of my existence and destiny, when I came to the gate of a luxuriant corn-field. The scene was most lovely. The field was surrounded by oak trees of the largest growth. A sacred silence reigned. It appeared as if nature were rendering her evening devotions to her great Creator. A slight breeze might now and then be seen gently waving the corn, and heard faintly rustling amid the dusky foliage. The departing sun, by his tremulous and evanescent rays, imparted that peculiar lustre which gives to objects an unearthly tinge. For some time I gazed in silence; then, with the rapidity of lightning, an idea shot across my mind which transfixed me. Although I retain a vivid remembrance of it, I despair of ever describing it. It was suggested by the prospect before me. It seemed as if the beauties of nature had become suddenly personified. I could not help exclaiming: How beautiful! Scarcely had that idea crossed my mind, when it reverted to the great Author of the scene. And if this be an emanation from that great and glorious Being, murmured I to myself, how beautiful, how glorious must be His nature! Immediately the idea of His presence recurred to me. The conviction that He was actually there flashed upon my mind. I can give you no conception of my feelings at that moment. I felt His eye was upon *me*, that *I* was the object of His scrutinizing gaze, that *I* was surrounded by God. Every sensibility of my soul trembled and quivered with emotion; the whole of my past history rose before me, written in characters of fire. If ever I knew what the word shame meant, it was at that moment. I felt that my whole life had been a series of provocations and insults to the greatest and best of Beings. I would have given a world if the thread of my existence could have been wound back. I felt that my polluted and deformed spirit was brought into contact with infinite purity and beauty.

This state of mind continued for some time. At length these emotions subsided, and I returned home determined to commence a new life.—But I feel exhausted with writing. I shall leave the remainder until another day."

Three or four suggestions are furnished by this sketch which claim brief consideration. One relates to *parents*. The circumstances and habits of a youth, no less than his tastes, should be regarded in determining his vocation and place of residence. His transfer from a hamlet to a city is fraught with peril. Rarely should a youth become resident in a large town who is ignorant of its dangers. Inconsiderateness on this point has occasioned many a domestic pang.

The importance of parents possessing true religion is prominently exhibited in this document. Who will undertake to tell us what a different history John Hessel's would have been, what a different destiny would probably have awaited him, had he had a prayerless mother! Should not his touching exclamation ring in the ears of every young woman, "O that I could give you an adequate idea of the resistless energy of female influence!" Parents what reply can you give to a profligate son who charges his vices mainly upon your irreligious training?

And take encouragement, ye pious parents who have to grieve over a wayward son. You see how difficult it is for a youth to break entirely away from the meshes fabricated by a parent's prayers. And the more earnest the prayers the stronger the meshes. Hope on, hope ever. Read an instance more encouraging than even John Hessel supplies. "The Rev. Daniel A. Clark was blessed from earliest years with the prayers and instructions of an eminently pious mother. The youth was rebellious and headstrong, and hated the restraint she imposed. He wished to indulge in his favourite amusements, particularly that of dancing, of which he was very fond. She, however, was

inexorable in her prohibition. He would get away by stealth, and engage in it with the merry company, and then go home to suffer all the agonies of remorse. After one of these seasons of stolen indulgence he says: 'I felt a part of hell in my bosom. I could not sleep. My whole system was so agitated that at length the bedstead shook. I began to think that God would bear with me no longer, and was about to cut me off in my sins.' He was often in like distress, and it was his mother's counsels and prayers that kept him in this trouble while he persisted in sin. At length those prayers were answered, and the rebellious youth became one of the most powerful preachers in America." Fathers and mothers, pray on, and on, and on.

Another suggestion relates to *young men.* A warning voice against theatre-going reaches you from the history of John Hessel. Is pleasure, however intense, to be purchased at the price of misappropriated time, misspent money, and immense risk to your moral principles and habits? Be persuaded to seek the more elevated pleasures which intelligent intercourse and instructive books afford. He regretted visiting the theatre; did he ever regret abandoning it? Do you know one who did?

Do not however indulge your love for reading to an unseasonable hour. You have his affirmation that by this means "he debilitated a constitution, strong and healthy." You make a bad bargain in bartering health for knowledge. The learned Dr. Owen has furnished testimony on this point. He declared that he would gladly surrender all the acquirements he had made after ten at night, could he have the health he had sacrificed by late study. Shall the experience of ten thousand sufferers be no warning to us? Depend upon it you cannot preserve health otherwise than by observing the requirements of your physical nature. Late rest is unnatural rest.

A hint is furnished by this sketch to *those who employ young men.* Ought all your concern for them to terminate in a mere cold physical exaction of labour? Is it Christian, is it human, to regard them merely as so much muscle and brain? Should not something of the father blend with the master? Should not a watchful eye be kept on their health, and an affectionate admonition be given if there be reason to suspect their habits? Say not in the criminally selfish spirit of Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" He who will one day be your Judge, says: "Let *no man* seek his own,"—his own exclusively,—"but *every* man another's welfare." In this case as in others, sound policy urges to the adoption of right principle.

Should not every Christian man evince a regard for our young men? A word of recognition and encouragement to a youth, if it answered no other purpose, would shield him from the chilling feeling that he is uncared for. What heart is not touched at the withering sense of loneliness experienced by young Hessel! Fathers show yourselves the friends of the young man. Treat him with the affability you would desire were you in his position.

Nor must those who have yielded to seductive influences be overlooked. Many, like the subject of this memoir, have a valuable substratum of moral sensibility underlying a thin crust of evil—the deposit of an early religious training. Many experience seasons of bitter self-reproach and earnestly purpose to abandon a course they feel to be destructive, but they lack the requisite moral strength. The influence of more depraved companions is over-powering. The grasp of a kind, Christian hand would rescue them. "Men of Israel help."

If a youth is sceptical, let us not deem that a reason for abandoning him. It is rather a reason for giving him special attention. Mayhap his scepticism is purely mental. Though truth and error are in utter contrast, no one

believes the contrast to be always palpable. Error oft-times invests herself in the garb of truth, and when the mind has repeatedly found itself deceived—proved that to be worthless it had esteemed invaluable—is it to be wondered if suspicion is created? The fact is that a youth bent on investigation—resolved to accept conclusions on no man's *ipse-dixit*—can no more help doubting than he can help thinking. A heathen historian is reported to have said that the search for truth is so arduous that most men adopt opinions which are ready-made. When therefore a youth is nobly resolved to tread the arduous path, shall we frown upon him? Shall we not rather bid him God speed? Take him by the hand, my brother. Encourage him frankly to propound his doubts. If you cannot solve them, introduce him to one who can. Rightly treated he will probably become a man of power—a blessing to the world. And if his scepticism is of the heart, be assured you are more likely to confirm him in it than allure him from it, by rebukeful words or chilling looks. Wise and weighty are the words of Canon Stanley on this subject. "How many hours, days, and years would have been spared from waste!—what promise of future usefulness might have been saved from utter ruin, if we had all of us always remembered that the growing mind cannot be treated as the mind full grown; that the errors, (if we choose to call them by so grave a name,) the opinions of youth, are usually but as passing clouds, to be treated gently and kindly, not hardly or severely." Whether the ardent youthful inquirer shall become a pillar in truth's glorious temple or a weapon employed against her, depends, in nine cases out of ten, on the treatment he receives from her professed friends.

"In resuming 'the thread of this eventful story,' I only observe that my seriousness greatly increased. I com-

menced the practice of private devotion which I had for years neglected; and took out of my desk the dusty Bible my mother had deposited in my trunk when I came to York. I had never entered the doors of a Dissenting chapel, except occasionally to hear Mr. Parsons. I began to attend his evening sermons regularly and felt myself wonderfully interested, I confess I knew not why. I was not much impressed, but could not keep away. This general interest ripened into a deep personal concern for the salvation of my soul. Mr. Parsons usually preaches a sermon to the young on the first Sabbath in the new year. This sermon I felt a strong desire to hear. I had a pressing invitation to spend that evening in the country. I believe I offended my friends by my determined purpose to attend Lendal chapel. I can well remember the emotions with which I went to the house of God that evening. My heart actually throbbed, and such was my eagerness to secure a seat, that although very early, I unconsciously ran along the street. The chapel was crowded. With breathless solicitude I awaited the arrival of the preacher, and when I saw him in the pulpit, an inexpressible feeling of delight stole over me, rendering it almost impossible to conceal my emotions. If ever any one came prepared to hear a sermon, I came prepared to hear that. I drank in every sentence. The text was from Timothy, 'Let no man despise thy youth.' I distinctly remember many passages of the sermon. I attempt not to give you any idea of the impression they produced. With the appeal I was overpowered. I retired to weep, to pray, to give myself to God.

"On that evening I became decided. I knew a great deal of the way of salvation from childhood, but it began now to unfold itself more distinctly. I soon began to think of entire consecration to the service of God, and after many severe mental struggles, relinquished all my worldly

prospects. I mentioned my desires to Mr. Parsons, who expressed his willingness to give me a recommendation to any of our Colleges. My father kindly bought out the last year of my apprenticeship, and about a year and a half ago I entered Airedale College. I need not tell you, my dear C—., that I have had harassing difficulties and temptations, but I never was so happy as I am now. Although I am constitutionally prone to melancholy my life is one of rich enjoyment. The very sensibility which produces depression creates the most intense kind of happiness. Those intellectual yearnings which I have cherished from infancy are now satisfied in the pursuit of the noblest truths the human mind can contemplate. I now see that God is an all-sufficient portion, and that without Him the restless soul can never be happy."

"I love, and have some cause to love, the earth—
She is my Maker's creature, therefore good;
She is my mother, for she gave me birth;
She is my tender nurse, she gives me food;—
But what's a creature, Lord, compared with Thee!
Or what's my mother or my nurse to me?

In having all things, and not Thee, what have I?
Not having Thee, what have my labours got?
Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I?
And having Thee alone, what have I not?
I wish nor sea nor land, nor would I be
Possessed of Heaven, Heaven unpossessed of Thee."

Two or three supplementary facts have been supplied which merit record. When about eight years old he walked from Catterton to York, a distance of seven miles, to purchase for himself a book. His thirst for knowledge, thus early developed, was not associated with any precocity of intellect. At Market Weighton he attracted no particular attention from the master, and was surpassed by several boys in the despatch of routine duties. In his case, as in

most others, sureness was allied to slowness. Acquirements were retained.

Toward the close of his apprenticeship he became so engrossed with studies as to betray an occasional mental absence unpleasant to the customer, and, of course, injurious to his masters. This was so evidently increasing that one day a lady was constrained to mention it to one of them. Young Hessel was soon informed of the communication, and ingenuously replied: "I know it, Sir. The fact is I cannot serve two masters." The satisfactoriness of his answer was sufficiently attested by the presentation of a copy of Dwight's Theology, in five octavo volumes, on his departure.

Though he would never have contemplated offering himself as a candidate for the Christian ministry while a stranger to converting grace—for he well knew that evidence of conversion was essential to obtaining recommendation from any section of the non-established church in England—he had some early premonition that he should be called to that office. During several past years all thoughts of it had been absent, but the impression produced by Mr. Parsons' sermon on the first Sunday in 1832 led to the kindling of strong desires for that sphere of usefulness. On the Sunday following he writes: "I recollect that three or four years ago my mind was strongly impressed with an idea that I might be called to the ministry. I have felt strong desires to enter it during the last two or three days."

The accompanying extract from his Journal is worthy of insertion, if it were only for the encouragement it furnishes to the faithful minister of Christ. It is but one of many instances in which the labours of such a minister produce results unknown and unsuspected by him. Jan. 30th. "During the past week I have been occupied with French, and Locke's Essay on the Understanding. I make but little progress in religion. I am harassed with perplexing doubts, and I do not feel that devotional spirit I could wish.

I was at church yesterday morning (at Tadcaster), and heard an excellent sermon from Mr. Maddocks. I went again in the evening. As I passed along the river banks the bells chimed sweetly, and seemed to breathe peace around the sacred edifice. The church being lighted gave it a very solemn appearance. After prayers Mr. Maddocks delivered a very affectionate discourse from John xiv. 27: 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.' He showed the misery which sin entailed upon the human race, pointed out religion as alone calculated to satisfy the mind, and earnestly exhorted such as had not yet found this peace, to close in with the offer of the blessed Redeemer. He addressed himself to those who were seeking it. This was my case. His words deeply impressed me. They were most encouraging."

The religious influences which operated upon young Hessel were well fitted to produce the catholicity he exhibited. His mother, whose counsels and prayers had consciously exercised a powerful restraint upon him, was a Wesleyan. Mr. Parsons, who had been instrumental in bringing him to a decision, was a Congregationalist. And Mr. Maddocks, whose lucid statements and earnest exhortation had imparted great encouragement, was a minister in the Establishment. How instructive are these facts to all! How rebukeful to those narrow-minded zealots who doubt the impartation of spiritual blessings to our world through any other medium than their own! How palpably does God honour men of all sects who seek to honour Him!

CHAPTER III.

AT AIREDALE COLLEGE. The spirit in which he enters College—Driffield—Ravenstonedale—Watson's Life of Wesley—Rev. Richard Knill—Life of Rev. David Stoner—Edmund Burke—Northallerton—Letter to Miss * * —Method of studying the Scriptures—Comparison of Howe and Edwards.

MR. HESSEL was one of four or five students who entered Airedale College at the period of its commencing a new historic era. It had existed seminally for many years at the neighbouring village of Idle, under the tutorship of the Rev. William Vint. Right glad were the students however, of whom I was one, to remove from a place whose name supplied unpleasant material for the punster. Current rumour says that on one occasion, a student being late in reaching the village which that day furnished his sphere of labour, a member of the congregation,—a plain-spoken Yorkshireman—suspecting their "supply" might be a stranger, kindly went forth to meet him. Approaching a person of ministerial garb he accosted him with the inquiry: "Are you an idle student?" Through the munificence of two wealthy ladies chiefly, a commodious structure was reared at Undercliffe, a mile from Bradford. The Rev. Walter Scott,—a man of vigorous intellect and large theological stores, but who, like some other divines, forgot, that "besides a conscience or moral nature for which God has provided a revelation of the holy, and an understanding for which He has provided a revelation of the true, man has also an imagination for which God has provided a revelation of the beautiful"—was appointed Professor of Theology. The Rev. Thomas R. Taylor—a man of refined mind, and

poetic powers which received an eulogistic tribute from James Montgomery,—soon removed, alas, by death,—was appointed Classical Tutor. His Journal exhibits the spirit in which Mr. Hessel entered on his college duties. On April 1st he writes:

"This book has for some time been neglected. It may not be improper to state that I entered Airedale College on the 24th of Feb. As I have now got settled I purpose to continue my daily observations. Some regulations have suggested themselves which I now record. 1. I see the importance of cultivating habits of strict mental discipline, so that I may have my powers at command. From neglect of this I have been at the mercy of every trivial circumstance. 2. Another important thing is the right improvement of time. I will adopt this motto: 'Take care of the minutes, the hours will take care of themselves.'"—This motto he wrote on a scrap of paper and suspended on the chimney-piece of his study.

After stating his purpose in reference to classical and theological studies, he adds: "I hope to cultivate more of the spirit of practical piety. I have fearfully fallen off lately. May the spirit of God quicken me, and enable me to consecrate all my powers to His glory. I see the necessity of watching over my words and actions. I fear I sometimes demean myself by improper mirth and frivolity—indulge too much in vulgar sayings and witticisms, and assume too much self-importance. These things often pain me, and I would fain renounce them. I wish also to manifest an obliging spirit to all around me. I have lately neglected this important duty, with many others equally important. With all my sins and imperfections I come to the Cross, praying for forgiveness and constant supplies of grace to enable me in future to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour in all things."—Here, it must be admitted, are buds of considerable promise. The new student is no starched,

self-consequential youth who has gone to College for the sake of saying he has been there. It is not accomplishments he seeks, nor intellectual acquirements merely, but sterling excellence.

His personal appearance secured him a favourable introduction to his new acquaintances. His thin face "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"; the intelligence beaming from those dark-brown eyes: the repose expressed by that countenance, incapable, apparently, of expressing any vile or even strong passion: the native dignity of his bearing; combined with a tall, slender, graceful figure, attired with peculiar neatness, could scarcely have failed to awaken interest in any circle.

At the time Mr. Hessel entered the College there were several preaching stations visited by the students so distant that we had to remain from two to six weeks. These places were supplied by the whole of us in regular rotation. He had been an inmate but about two months when it devolved upon him to supply a vacant pulpit at Driffield for three weeks. The practice of sending young students on such occasions is not free from grave objection. It deserves careful consideration however, whether the benefits do not outweigh the disadvantages. Is not the acquirement of knowledge too exclusive a pursuit in Colleges? By all means let the Christian minister be well furnished with scholastic learning. But is not the power to use it efficiently as important as the acquisition? And must not pulpit efficiency, like efficiency in all other arts, be acquired by practice? Two or three weeks occasionally spent among a people as their temporary pastor would prove a valuable experimental process to many a student. That Mr. Hessel derived a benefit greatly preponderating the disadvantage, his records compel us to believe. In a review of this period written for Miss * *, he says: "I shall ever look back with pleasure upon the time I spent in that place.

I do not remember any journey in which I have derived so much benefit. In travelling I met with some interesting companions and got my views enlarged upon several subjects. I am not aware that my visit improved my preaching much. I believe I composed but one sermon. It was a valuable sermon to me, however, for it contained more thought than all my previous compositions put together. I had been in the habit of taking up my pen after having obtained a few vague notions of my subject, and writing as fancy dictated. My productions were of course light and frothy, and although there might be much beautiful imagery they failed in producing the desired effect. The sermon to which I have alluded was the first I *thought out*, and no doubt it has imparted a tone to all I have since composed.

"My stay at Driffield was beneficial in several other respects. I had leisure to apply to practical purposes the new principles I had learnt at College. I have not the least doubt that my time was far better spent than it would have been there. My spiritual interests received an improvement of which I am conscious to this day. I communed much with my own spirit; and amid the scenes of nature I often found delightful incitements to devotion. Faint glimpses of a better state of things occasionally burst upon me, and I often felt a yearning, irrepressible, desire to be greatly good."

On the 16th of August he writes: "I have this day attained the twentieth year of my age and it cannot be improper to make it a season of devout gratitude—of deep humiliation—of unfeigned and sincere resolution of amendment—and of renewed and solemn dedication to God." —He enlarges on each of these particulars in the spirit of the preceding extracts.

Through the winter months he pursues a student's customary and uneventful path. Spring, however, brings a

commons to one of the two remotest preaching stations. On March 26th he arrives at Ravenstonedale in Westmoreland, a small agricultural village, half embosomed amid [illegible] and barren mountains with here and there a pretty green. As it regards both climate and society it was one of the last places in England he would then have chosen for a month's residence. But he went neither as a tourist nor a mere student, but in the true spirit of an evangelist. He soon obtains information relative to the moral condition of the population, and ere he retires to rest his Journal receives this entry: "The prospect here is not encouraging. Prejudice and insensibility to spiritual things appear to be the prominent moral features of this place. The people with whom I lodge appear to be simple and pious."—Little did he imagine, as he penned these lines, that on this barren and unpromising soil he would spend his last and best energies; and that by the blessing of God upon his labours, the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose. Yet so it was. In little more than two years Providence very unexpectedly directed him to that place, and he laboured for more than twelve months with signal success.

He proceeds: "My mind has often been occupied with spiritual things to-day, yet I have not experienced that enjoyment in the closet I have sometimes done. Oh, how important to be continually applying afresh at the throne of grace. I find, in this respect, I must be a beggar all my life. There is no treasuring up spiritual supplies so as to acquire an independency.

"In looking upon the beauties of nature I was led to regard them as the production of the spirit of God—the varied forms of beauty they assumed as the impress of the Infinite mind. If mere matter beneath His operation can assume such magnificence and beauty, to what a height of moral grandeur will the mind be raised which has experienced His quickening influence! This renders the pros-

pect of a future state unspeakably delightful."—How many of those whose eyes had gazed on those scenes had entertained similar thoughts and experienced similar emotions? How truly as well as beautifully does Coleridge say:

> "We receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does nature live:
> Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
> And would we aught behold, of higher worth
> Than that inanimate cold world allowed
> To the poor, loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
> Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
> A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud,
> Enveloping the Earth—
> And from the soul itself must there be sent
> A sweet and potent voice of its own birth,
> Of all sweet sounds the life and element!"

Though accustomed to attend the Wesleyan ministry when a youth at home, he was too young to have any intelligent opinion relative to either the system or its founder. From that period he had not only been entirely withdrawn from Methodism, but had mingled occasionally with those who thought it more worthy of condemnation than of eulogy. The uncharitable utterances of those presumed to be well-informed had their usual effect upon an uninformed and unsuspecting mind. While at Ravenstonedale he met with Watson's Life of Wesley and read it. His judgment of the book reveals the nobleness of his heart. 31st. "I have been much pleased with the Life of Wesley. I think many of the Dissenters have not done him justice. O that we had more of his spirit! Very few men have been so useful. I dare not sneer at one whom God has so signally honoured. I feel ashamed at the prejudice by which I have long been influenced, for undoubtedly he was one of the excellent of the earth."

April 18th, Sat. "I think I never felt such a desire to devote myself to the cause of God as at present. I have

been wrestling with God to pour out a blessing to-morrow. Great God, hast Thou not promised? Let my future life be a satisfactory answer to the following inquiries: What can I do in the College? In the church? In the world?"

22nd. "Remember never to neglect prayer when I do not feel myself in a right state of mind. This is a baneful practice. If my mind is not in a right frame there is so much more necessity for prayer. Sometimes I have given way to the temptation, and almost invariably the day has been unhappy; when I have persevered I have often found that peculiarly 'a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' There are various ways in which this spiritual apathy may be removed. 1. Seize upon some solemn passage of Scripture and make a close application of it to the heart. 2. Write down my sins, wants, mercies, &c., in my Diary, and contemplate them until my heart is affected. 3. Read over a portion of my Diary, that past negligence and past mercy may incite to present duty."—There is true philosophy in the course he here prescribes for concentrating the attention and impressing the heart. Whenever you wish to experience any particular emotion, brood over the fact or sentiment fitted to evoke it. Thought is the parent of emotion.

25th. "Have lately felt the importance of studying the Bible in a different way. I think that by selecting topics, and collecting all the scriptural information upon them I can find, I may learn more of the Bible than in any other way. Nothing will supersede the necessity of being thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures."

Few persons appreciated genius or talent more fervently. It is instructive therefore to mark the impression made by the simple-minded but eminently devoted Richard Knill, who visited the College the day after Mr. Hessel's return from Ravenstonedale. "Mr. Knill was here in the afternoon, and spoke with the students. In the evening we went

to hear him preach. A genuine Christian! Before him the blaze of genius and the flash of oratory dwindle into a twinkling taper."—This excellent man has recently passed away from us. Though literature enrols not his name among her sons, few Ministers of the Gospel have better served their generation. "His usefulness in the way of conversion of souls to God," says a competent judge, the now sainted J. A. James, "was perhaps greater, all things taken into account, than that of any other man of his day in this kingdom." "The instances are too numerous to admit of record," says his admirable biographer, "in which his words spoken in fitting circumstances, and at a critical moment came with electric power on individual hearts. It is said, that as many as a hundred ministers now preaching the gospel at home and abroad, trace their first purpose to give their souls to Christ, or their lives to the public service of his church, to his quickening appeals." His history triumphantly shows that it is not great talent so much as great devotedness that secures the grand purposes of Christianity. "He was no rhetorician," says Mr. James, "nor, if eloquence consist of great and original conceptions clothed with glowing imagery and splendid diction, could he pretend to this: his eloquence was that of the heart, gushing out in streams of impassioned feeling, which carried away his hearers on the tide of his own emotion—the eloquence of a man on fire with zeal for God, and melted into compassion for souls hovering on the verge of the bottomless pit—the eloquence of faith and love."

May 2nd. "Have not been happy to-day. The reason is I did not begin the day with God. When shall I learn wisdom."

On the 3rd he had to preach at Booth, a beautiful romantic village in the neighbourhood of Halifax. Before quitting his bed-room on the Sunday morning he records some of the thoughts which fill his soul. "A beautiful

morning! Everything around is loveliness and magnificence. Showers have fallen during the night and refreshed the earth. Oh that showers of grace would descend upon our Zion. I have just been praying for this. I wish to preach this day so that I may be able to affirm: 'I am clear from the blood of all men; I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.'"

6th. "It would be highly beneficial to write occasionally in my own language the most interesting parts of Sacred Writ."

"My mind often wanders in prayer. To remedy this I will put down my wants in my Diary, and thus concentrate my attention. At present I want, 1. A more vivid impression of the grandeur and importance of spiritual things. 2. A more conscious enjoyment of the favour of God; the removal of fears and doubts; more affecting apprehensions of the Divine character. 3. A deliverance from my besetting sins; especially pride of intellect, attainment, and all its attendant evils; arrogance, contempt, anger, &c., which destroy my peace, injure others, obstruct my usefulness, and are odious in the sight of God. 4. A revival in the College; more seriousness and prayerfulness of spirit; study of God's word; brotherly love."

7th. "Another day has come to a close. The sun has just sunk behind the western hills, and the clouds tinged with his rays are gradually assuming a fainter hue. A prospect of mingled beauty and magnificence lies before me. The fields are dressed in richest green, the landscape is adorned with woods, and the distant blue hills rising in towering majesty occupy the background. A solemn stillness reigns. It seems as tho' nature were offering her evening devotions to her great Creator. Let my heart sympathize with her. Let my thanksgivings be mingled with her praise."

An occurrence now transpired which I am reluctant

to narrate because of the imputation it reflects upon others. Since no names are mentioned, however, and it served to exhibit the character of my friend so fully, I cannot persuade myself to suppress the mention of it. It formed part of every Friday afternoon's duties at the College for one of the students to read an Essay on a self-selected subject in the presence of the others and the Theological Tutor, for the purpose of criticism. It was desired that tho' the criticism should be kindly expressed, it should be as free as possible. Any decided and objectionable peculiarity would, of course, among such a number of young men of various temperaments as well as talents, call forth occasionally, something more than animadversion. It was now his turn to produce an Essay. As a composition, the one he read indicated rather than exhibited talent. Its most prominent feature was excess of imagination, a pardonable fault in a writer of little more than twenty. It was commented upon, generally, in a tone of great severity. It was one of those occurrences which severely test a man. He calmly reviewed the matter next day and thus records the result. 16th. "Yesterday read an essay 'on the influence of the Bible.' It was most unmercifully criticised by the students. It did not receive justice from any one except Mr. Scott. In a calm review of the matter I believe the following is a just statement of the case. 1. The essay does possess value as a literary production. The imagery is too luxuriant, my exalted conceptions of the subject caused this. 2. It was badly read. I cannot read well under such circumstances. 3. I am certain it was not understood. This forms some excuse for their treatment, though the bitterness of some was clearly the result of envy. 4. I manifested a very wrong spirit. The treatment was unjust, I cannot but think, but I ought to have borne it patiently. Many hateful feelings of pride and contempt troubled my mind for a long time. May God forgive me.

O Jesus, what are my trials to thine! However, I hope to learn some useful lessons from the occurrence. 1. To accommodate myself to the prejudices of my fellow-students. When I see them wrong, instead of directly or even playfully opposing their opinions, let me endeavour to correct them by gentle means. 2. Let the unhappy bias of some excite sincere, loving pity rather than contempt. 3. Let me endeavour at all times to speak pleasantly."—Here is a practical illustration of the way in which evils may conduce to our good. And no otherwise, be it understood, can they thus conduce.

"Thus ever in the steps of grief,
Are sown the precious seeds of joy;
Each fount of Marah hath a leaf,
Whose healing balm we may employ."

June 4th. "I wish to keep the following things in view: 1. Nothing is to be done without prayer—constant, simple, fervent prayer. 2. God is able and willing to do everything He has promised. 3. Let me never cease asking Him to revive His work in my own soul, in the College, in the church, and in the world."

5th. "Dr. Cotton Mather inquired every morning what he should do in order to be most useful during that day. I will adopt a similar practice, and enter upon the engagements of each day with some specific object. O that God would incline my heart to devise and carry out plans of usefulness! What might I not have done, if I had but attempted great things in a spirit of dependence upon Him."

11th. "Prayed this evening under the tree and felt my mind much humbled and subdued. I want to live more in the spirit of prayer. This will be the best director of all my pursuits—will save me from a thousand follies, and secure me satisfying happiness."

21st. "As the vacation is very near, and I shall not have much time after to-day, I will engage in a few reflections

upon the duties and responsibilities it will bring. 1. Let me be more careful in my preaching to select topics suitable to my hearers; and sedulously prepare for preaching by prayer and meditation. 2. Let me cultivate amiability of spirit in all my intercourse with my fellow men. Let there be nothing morose, austere, or proud; but the kindest feelings be evinced to every one. 3. Let my conversation, when not directly upon religion, be imbued with the spirit of religion, so that the transition from common to sacred topics may be natural and easy. 4. Let me also treat prejudices tenderly; for however unreasonable, it is wise to avoid exciting them."

30th." I feel much dissatisfied with my religious experience. Surely my mental energy has never been directed to the great work of spiritual advancement. Have felt much in reading Stoner's life.—I should like to know the truth on these subjects."—Mr. Stoner, as a Wesleyan minister, held it to be the privilege of every Christian to have a consciousness, by direct divine attestation, of his acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, and to receive "grace sufficient" to be made and "preserved blameless" as to motive "unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Mr. Hessel had an adverse notion, but not having examined these subjects his candour will not suffer him to pronounce respecting them.

July 9th. "Experienced a little earnestness this morning in prayer. I trust I was melted for my sins, and felt desirous of devoting myself to God anew. Although I have been busy all day in my studies, I seem to make no advancement. I don't drink in knowledge; I only sip it in drops."

On August 4th, in fulfilment of a promise, he writes to one of his fellow-students—Mr. Brennand: "I suppose it is customary for students, in corresponding with each other, to write witty and jocose letters. I confess I have no admi-

ration of such correspondence. Perhaps this may arise from the fact that I have no talent for this style of writing. Be that as it may, it certainly appears to me contemptible, and altogether unworthy the character we ought to sustain.

"I suppose I must tell you what I have been doing since I left our Alma Mater. I have been more industrious than usual, for I have both read and written a great deal. I never thought so much in the same time, and you know that intense thinking is the grand means of intellectual advancement. Unless all the energies of the mind be concentrated—unless the intellectual eye looks clearly and steadily upon its object, there can be no material progress. I am more than ever convinced that mere desultory reading is injurious.

"I have lately been occupied with Burke, and am captivated with him. There is rich plunder for the student in his works. In some of his pieces he pours forth the rich treasures of his mind with a prodigality unrivalled. Occasionally his imagination runs wild. In the critique upon his writings by Professor Rogers I met with a passage which pleased me much. I will transcribe it, for I have no doubt it will give you equal pleasure. 'Those who have no imagination, or but little, have small cause to plume themselves on the attainment of a cold correctness. It is a virtue which, like the temperance of old age, they cannot help practising. . . . . None but Apollo himself could drive such steeds of fire.' I am now commencing Smith's 'Wealth of Nations,' and have brought home with me this evening Orme's 'Life of Baxter.'

"In preaching I have laid aside my grandeur, and endeavour to unfold and enforce divine truth in as simple a manner as I am able. I believe that short, energetic sermons, in which doctrine and appeal are mingled, are most useful. I often employ a direct mode of address."

Three days afterwards I received my first letter from

him. After mentioning some arrangements for my paying him a visit at his Uncle Campbell's at Howden, he says: "And now, the details of business being settled, let me turn my attention to better things. In the first place I shall attempt a brief answer to your important inquiries. In answer to the first, I can say I 'have been doing.' I do not remember a period in which I have studied so hard as since I left you. I do hope that the ardent desires in which I then indulged were not the gay dreams of an illusive imagination. I do hope I have commenced a new era in my intellectual existence. I have read, I have thought, I have written, I have felt. What I have read, thought, written, and felt, I cannot tell you now, I must reserve it till you come.

"You will regard this language as boastful perhaps, but be it illusion or reality, I certainly have had the idea of intellectual advancement strongly impressed upon my mind. At the same time, I never, I think, saw so much of my own ignorance as now. I have great reason for thankfulness—abundant cause for humiliation. My mind feels as if it were struggling with all its bad habits, determined to emancipate itself, or perish in the attempt.

"I need not tell you that one cannot be doing in our way without receiving advantages. Well-directed mental exertion is its own reward; not its only one.

"I have preached—but alas, very feebly. If now and then there was a flash of light, or a movement of power, it speedily vanished. Here again I must use the language of gratitude and humiliation. At times, I think I never felt so much for immortal souls; and at others, I think I never was so awfully indifferent. I know my dear friend, you will sympathize with me—I trust you will pray for me. The following things have been impressed upon my mind with respect to preaching. You will pardon the form in which I clothe them. 1. Let us preach to *sinners*. I fear

we direct too exclusive attention to professing Christians. I think that students are especially called upon 'to do the work of an evangelist.' I feel it is my duty to direct my energies chiefly to the unconverted. 2. My sermons have been too long. I could not command energy to deliver them, nor the people patience to hear them with profit. 3. I see the importance of getting a number of common every day facts for the illustration and enforcement of divine truth. The common people want *food*, not dainties; a dinner, not a dessert. 4. I am convinced it is best to write a sermon all at once. Get your principal thoughts collected, and if you like, the introduction written, the night before. But more of this when I see you."

Immediately on his return to College he had to undertake pastoral duties at Northallerton for two weeks. On Monday morning, Sept. 7th, he writes in his Journal: "I am still conscious of a reserve of mental energy in the pulpit; sometimes the conviction comes upon me like a flash of lightning. O God! have pity upon a poor creature struggling with his depravity and moral indolence. Let a ray of light, and an effusion of energy, visit this dark and feeble spirit, and make me 'a workman which needeth not to be ashamed.' What do I want this evening? For myself: 1. Physical energy; strength to preach boldly; to give powerful utterance and proper intonation to the truths I have arranged. 2. Mental vigour; strong perception; a vivid imagination; accurate judgment; and retentive memory. And above all, moral sensibility—a just estimate of the vast and unparalleled importance of the truths I deliver; a sense of the presence of God; a deep and solemn apprehension of the value of the immortal soul; a love for these immortal spirits that will burn like a fire within me. For the people: 1. Attention; disposition to hear; candour; correctness of judgment. 2. That the Spirit may be poured upon us all; that a peculiar unction, a divine energy which

no human eloquence can impart, may be given; that a spirit of deep, heart-felt, anxious inquiry may be awakened; that the prayer of the publican may ascend from every breast. 3. That the careless may be alarmed; the waverer brought to decision; the penitent consoled; that souls may be saved."

On the next day he writes: "Never saw so clearly that I am now commencing a new career in the work of preaching. Hitherto I have been playing, now I must begin to work. I see myself to be a mere child, in the very A, B, C, of pulpit labours. I am now convinced that unless I do my best every way I am robbing God of His due; for my reason, imagination, judgment, memory, voice, all my faculties, whether of mind or body, are His. I am conscious that I am capable of doing much better than I have done. Satan tells me that if I strive to attain the highest possible excellence I am only pleasing and serving myself, merely gratifying my own ambition. This is a mere trick, which has unhappily been too successful. Let then every sermon be a step higher in the ascent to excellence; and whenever I fancy I have done pretty well let me beware of resting contented; let this act as a stimulant to further improvement. This cannot be effected without much prayer however—that intense yearning, wrestling of the spirit which will be dissatisfied if one single attainable blessing be withheld. Lord grant this spirit of prayer."

8th. "I find that if I am to possess much divine knowledge I must gather it in the same way as every humble Christian. I must learn it by practical lessons, and not from theological books merely."

9th. "The rain has ceased, and the morning is beautiful. What an idea does this convey of the character of the Divine Being! How silently and gently do His blessings descend! How unostentatious is His benevolence! We can feel His goodness even before we perceive it."

How many a preacher's heart will respond to all the sentiments here expressed! 13th. "Sunday, 6 p.m. Had a pleasant time this morning. Felt considerable tenderness of spirit, although not that deep and powerful energy I wished. It is with trembling solicitude I view the time of evening service approach. My heart tells me I shall fail. But my soul waits upon God. The night is rainy, and I fear the congregation will be small. Never felt my emotions to be of so mingled a character. I feel I am not worth the notice of God, and yet I cannot forbear entreating His assistance."

It was during this visit to Northallerton that he wrote the interesting letter from which so large an extract was given in the former chapter. The remaining portion shall be supplied. "When I review my short religious career I see great reason for humility and self-abasement. God has been peculiarly good and I have been peculiarly thoughtless and ungrateful. Of late, I hope my mind has been raised from the lethargy into which I had fallen; but, I feel a proneness to slumber again. I trust that God will make you instrumental in urging me forward in a career of usefulness. I cannot now express my feelings on this subject. Perhaps I may disclose them in conversation. A wish something to this effect has often come with startling power across my spirit—that not a single blessing may be withheld from the world which, by the utmost intensity of effort, I can be the means of communicating. I wish my life to be crowded with action, and that action directed to the best and noblest ends. My dearest C—, I conjure you by everything that is tender, affecting, and solemn, in our present circumstances and future prospects, that you pray for me. Remember you cannot pray in vain. The influence of your prayers must be felt in my character, labours, and enjoyment. By the very constitution of our Redeemer's government it must be so. I thought of your prayers last Sunday, in the pulpit. I thought I felt them mingling with my

own, adding strength to every desire, and energy to every petition. This gave new impulse to my mind, and I trust a divine power was felt in the congregation. I thought the evening service peculiarly solemn, and I have no doubt strong impressions were produced upon the minds of many. May they be lasting!

"I should like our intercourse to be carried on with child-like simplicity, being convinced that the nearer we approximate to our blessed Redeemer the more we shall become 'as little children.' In order to secure a lasting mutual attachment we must each strive to be amiable and lovely; and we can only be so as we resemble Him. Conformity to Him is the ground of my hope of happiness, and if I did not think it was yours also, I hesitate not to say, the sooner our connection is dissolved the better. Let not my dear C— imagine that a single suspicion has crossed my mind. No, I am persuaded better things of you, and I hope, with all your 'weaknesses and faults,' (for I am not one of those gallant knights who would suppose you have none,) you will be 'a help-meet for me.' I am glad your standard of connubial happiness is high. I want you to be a *companion;* and I cannot but regard with a pity bordering on contempt those individuals who seek in a wife only a convenient piece of household furniture.

"Permit me to recommend a new mode of letter-writing. I should like you to have a Journal, and whenever you have any thing to say to me write it down while your views and feelings are fresh. Tell me your cares, great and little, your joys, and sorrows, and difficulties. This is far better than sitting down to write a letter. I intend to adopt a similar plan. I am convinced that this mode will not only be more pleasant but more profitable. Give full expression to your feelings. Surely now you dare venture to repose confidence in me. This will be the means of exciting our sympathies, and cementing our attachment.

"In my next I intend to give you an outline of my plans for future life. We ought to have clear and intelligent views of the objects of our existence, and pursue them with untiring industry.

"You tell me not to flatter you. Now do you seriously think I can be guilty of flattery? I have told you what I thought was truth; and I must now tell you, that much as I admire you, I think you susceptible of great improvement. I have no doubt we shall be mutually useful. It is your province to cultivate my finer feelings; it is mine to raise your intellectual character. You must create beauty and inspire warmth; I must impart energy and strength. I think you will not find fault with this division of labour.

"I intend us to read much together. I have got Hannah More's Poetical Works, and before I send them to you, I shall read them, and point out what I deem beautiful or useful. This I would especially remark, that if you would secure mental improvement you must make extensive use of your pen. Depend upon it, it is the grand instrument for teaching us to think. If possible, never let a day pass without some exercise in composition. Mere desultory reading will do you little good; writing will be the grand means of causing you to reflect upon what you read. It will call your powers into action, and cause you to enjoy an intenser life."

In a letter to me, written about the same time, he says: "Ever since I left you I have been in a state of intense mental excitement. I have studied hard. My frame is almost worn down with work. This affair, instead of proving a hindrance to study, appears to have given a new impetus to my energies. I now feel I have a double care, a double responsibility, a double motive for exertion. I feel that I have taken another being beneath my protection, and am bound by the tenderest and most solemn obligations to place her interests on the same footing with my own. The

world is before us, and Providence our guide. It is the latter part of this sentence which affords me support and consolation, and I am certain it is the ground of her dependence. I must confess that when imagination puts on her sable vestments, as she often does, I feel great anxiety. I know it is wrong to yield to it, but in those seasons I cannot help it. What, if I should be thrown into some obscure place that would not yield a comfortable subsistence! What, if pale and meagre poverty should stare me in the face! How could I bear the idea of bringing my dear C— into such circumstances? Or if I should become the victim of a premature grave, and leave her with a helpless infant to brave the powers of this cold-hearted world? These are not very pleasant thoughts, and if it were not for religion, they would, in those seasons of depression, rend every fibre of this too susceptible heart. O that I could always charge my soul to 'wait *only* upon God!'

"I have just come from the chapel where I have been preaching upon 'growing in grace.' I hope the seed will not be scattered in vain. It is a solemn thought that every sermon we preach will have some influence upon the audience, and that influence will be recognised in the decision of the last day. I do hope, my dear Priestley, that God is bringing me into a better way in every thing. I think I see more than ever the importance of having our eye 'single.' It is only when this is the case we can reasonably expect to do good. If we do otherwise confer any benefit upon our fellow-men, we shall receive no reward for it. How fearful the thought, if after all, we should serve but as scaffolding to the great spiritual temple God is erecting in our fallen world!

"I do not remember that I ever felt myself more loosened from the world than now. I hope that C— is not a tie to this world, but that, under God, she will be the means of sweetly wooing me to another. But still I see the necessity

of watching over my heart, lest, unperceived, it should entwine itself too much around the creature. I have told her that in order to give permanency to our attachment, we must each strive to be amiable and lovely, and that we can only be so by bearing the image of the Redeemer. Moral beauty must be the grand reciprocal attraction by which our hearts are united. And the bonds of this love cannot be made too strong.

11th. "I find I must give up to-day to recreation, for I feel so weakened through the exertions of the last five days, that I am certain I shall injure my health if I am not cautious. Writing, although one of the finest mental exercises, nevertheless exacts a dreadful tribute upon the bodily energies. I could soon write myself out of existence. I never before felt so much the force of those nervous lines of Mrs. Hemans :—

'Yet have I known it long,
Too restless and too strong
Within this clay hath been the o'ermastering flame;
Swift thoughts that came and went
Like torrents o'er me sent,
Have shaken, as a reed, this thrilling frame.'

"I have tried our plan of studying the Scriptures with the most abundant success. Although I have written twelve pages, I have got only to the 9th verse of the 15th of John. I need not tell you I am much pleased, but I have also been much profited. My experience has falsified the statement that devotion cannot be carried into Biblical criticism. I am aware that the mere apparatus of criticism is not adapted to excite, but rather to repress, the feelings; but I am convinced that in the application of that apparatus devotion is the best guide. The mind that is smitten with a hearty love of truth will delight to view her temple, not only in the distance, where the eye can grasp the stately grandeur and fair proportion of the whole, it will find a

pleasure not less intense in examining the elegant mouldings, and the fair cornices of the exterior, with the beautiful 'carved work' of the interior. I do not remember that I ever had such views of the intimate and tender connection between Christ and His people, as I have derived from the verses I have read. May you and I, my dear friend, be among the number of those who 'bear much fruit.'—Our plan aimed at securing the results of mutual study of the same subject. We agreed on a chapter in the Bible for critical investigation, and at intervals compared notes, and thus reaped the benefit of each other's views.

"With Edwards I get on slowly, but successfully," he proceeds. "I *think* on the subject an hour or two every day. You know I do not compute my mental advancement by the number of pages I read. I am also reading Charnock on 'the Patience of God.' He is very excellent, but does not stand among the highest order of divines. Howe and Edwards are now decidedly my favourites; elected, I think, for ever. The noble soul of the former seems to grasp the whole range of truth; the bold and nervous spirit of the latter appears to have examined every part of its foundations. The mind of Howe was like a splendid temple, the residence of truth, which stood in bold and striking prominence, beautiful in symmetry and proportion, alluring all to come and survey the fair inhabitant. The mind of Edwards is like a gothic castle, which stands unshaken by assault—uninjured by the mouldering hand of time; and whose lofty and massive battlements frown upon the empire of darkness. I feel grateful that God ever sent two such spirits into the world. They elevate the standard of thought, and furnish a faint glimpse of the intellectual and moral grandeur of the world to come.

"I have a great deal to say for which I have neither time nor room. I wish I could concentrate my information. O for a lightning flash of intelligence which would reveal in a

moment what would require a day to unfold by the ordinary medium! In a future state we may expect something of this sort; but such a flame would consume this earthly tabernacle.

"I have heard again from Miss * *. She is a good girl. Her religion puts mine to the blush.

"I have had many of those intellectual longings of late; those aspirings after something great and excellent which words cannot express. How sweet are those lines—I repeat them many times a day:—

'Something far more divine
Than may on earth be mine,
Haunts my worn heart, and will not let me rest.'"

CHAPTER IV.

AT AIREDALE COLLEGE. Sedbergh—Kirkby Lonsdale—Projects—Letter to Miss * * —Humiliating discovery—Benefit of a Journal—Means by which his enjoyment of prayer was increased—Amplitude of means of self-improvement—Practices found to be injurious—Solicitude for usefulness—Concentration of energy—Important inquiry—Aphorisms on reading.

SHORTLY after his return from Northallerton, Sedbergh, a small market-town at the north-western extremity of the West-Riding, claimed his services. "This place has many natural attractions," he writes. "It is situated in one of the most romantic dells I ever saw. It is encircled by an amphitheatre of hills about ten miles in circumference, whose towering peaks pierce the clouds. The ground within this circuit is very varied. There are numerous abrupt and fantastic eminences which appear to mimic the gigantic hills. The whole country is beautifully wooded, and a mountain stream runs through it. I have this evening been tracing its meanderings, and I know not when I have enjoyed the scenes of nature more. This beautiful rivulet assumes almost every variety of aspect. Sometimes it glides along in silent and sullen majesty beneath the overhanging foliage which seems to frown upon it, and then it contends in angry surges with the rugged rocks over which it rushes. I was so enamoured of the fair goddess Nature that I could not help taking up the pencil and attempting to sketch her lovely features. But I am no artist; I have forgot myself; I can give you but 'a miserable daub.'"

These regions not then having been honoured with the visit of the steam-horse, Mr. Hessel had to break his journey at Kirkby-Lonsdale. The inn where he was accommodated

bears testimony to his devotedness. Before quitting it next morning he wrote: "Rose by half-past six. After breakfast I retired for prayer. I have reason to believe I had access to a throne of grace. I was especially enabled to pray for a blessing on my journey. I laid out a plan for my study, &c., during the coming month. The scenery around this place is beautiful. Have taken a walk into the church-yard, and on the river's bank—they are beyond description."

The following is the plan he mentions: "As it is of the utmost importance in any pursuit to have its objects well defined, so that the mind may clearly see at what it is aiming and be enabled to ascertain its progress, I will lay down the great objects to which I intend to consecrate the next month. I wish to acquire a better acquaintance with the classics. I have the painful retrospect of much time spent in them to no purpose simply on account of the way in which their study has been pursued. A careless mode of translating has been my mischief. From this I will now make a determined effort to extricate myself. The only rule I lay down is this general one—to make every word an object of distinct attention—to hold every image before the mind so long that a copy of it may be engraven upon the memory; never, if possible, pass by any thing obscure, but by careful and patient investigation clear up every difficulty.

"I wish to get into a better way of preaching. In the following things I will seek an improvement: 1. In voice. I want loudness, clearness, variety, strength. For this I will exercise myself every day upon some of the hills. 2. In style. I will aim at greater perspicuity. Avoid long sentences, in which the sentiment cannot be easily comprehended; and the contrary extreme of short ones, in which it cannot be easily retained. Unite simplicity with boldness and vigour. Make great use of direct address; I am confident it will tend to interest a congregation. The people

like to feel that the preacher is speaking to them—not repeating a composition. 3. In energy. Here I have failed. This is partly to be attributed to the peculiar delicacy of my mind, to depression of spirits when in the pulpit, and to the drudgery of repeating a discourse memoriter, by which the nobler faculties of the mind are cramped, but principally to a want of more piety. I know that if I formed a right estimate of the solemn situation I occupy when in the pulpit; if I could see and feel my own responsibility, the value of immortal souls, and the dread realities of eternity, I could not but be energetic. Prayer, then, must be the great means of increasing energy.

"These are the principal objects I propose, I have others but they are subsidiary. My aim is to come from Sedbergh a better classic and a better preacher."

"I promised in my last to give you an outline of my plan of future life," he writes to Miss * * on the Monday after his arrival. "Without attempting any formal representation of my purposes, I will offer a few cursory remarks respecting them. In our future correspondence I shall no doubt often allude to this subject. I wish to aim at a high standard of moral and intellectual excellence. Of moral excellence I am lamentably deficient. When I think of my privileges I have reason to be ashamed. I am convinced my dear C—, that *eminent piety is the only solid foundation for permanent and extensive usefulness.* In order that you and I may be useful we must strive to be uncommon Christians. As to intellectual excellence it is my wish to cultivate those powers which God has given me to the utmost. I cannot charge myself with indolence. I believe I now do as much as my frame will bear. I say not this in a spirit of self-commendation, I merely state what I believe to be fact. I have reason to be grateful to the great author of my existence that He has given me an ardent, quenchless desire for knowledge, and has also

furnished me with means to gratify it. I hope you have no objection to accept a *student* for a husband. Although I cannot expect you to tread the heights to which I aspire, I trust your acquaintance with literature and general knowledge will be considerable. *Much, nay every thing, depends upon yourself. If you are bent upon improving your mind you are sure to accomplish your object.*

"I hope you are not among the number of those who think they have finished their education. You will think no worse of me, my dear C—, when I tell you, that in considering your mental character, I have thought quite as much of what you might be as of what you are. You have now a wide field of enterprise before you, and in pointing you to it I would animate you with the enthusiasm which fires my own breast.

"In all my plans and purposes I wish you to take a part. I shall always require your counsel, your sympathy, your care. I shall not be satisfied unless you take a deep interest in my affairs as well as in me. When agitated by the storms of this scene of strife I shall always hope to find repose in you; when deep anxieties prey upon the heart I trust I shall find relief by making a safe deposit of my troubles in your breast; when chilled by the indifference of this ice-hearted world I shall always expect that your heart beats warm with sympathy and affection. You see I make a large demand upon you, but not larger I hope than you are willing to give. I do not forget that you will have equally strong claims upon me,—claims which I trust I shall ever delight to yield. Neither of us must live to ourselves; we must live for each other that we may live to God. There must be unity of thought, of desire, of purpose, and of action. Our wishes, our plans, our efforts, our hopes, and our prayers, must all be one. We serve one God, we believe in one Saviour, we are washed in the same blood, we are sanctified by the same Spirit, we are con-

secrated to the same service, we are travelling to the same heaven, and surely with such motives to unity, in addition to those tender bonds whose mysterious power over our nature is perhaps inexplicable, we ought to be united.

"Do not imagine that I am picturing a scene of uninterrupted harmony and bliss. So long as we possess a depraved nature, 'offences will come.' I am not so ignorant of the married state as to imagine, that even under the most favourable auspices, it is good unmixed with alloy. There may be coldness—there may be fancied neglect—there may even be times when the souls wont to chime so sweetly, will 'grate harsh discord.' But then we have so much common ground of love—so many arguments for mutual amity. If we should experience a partial estrangement, there are so many sweet attractions to induce us to return. Surely we can never take our differences to Calvary, and agitate them within the hallowed precincts of that cross on which the Prince of Peace bled and died! And I trust, that whatever may be our state, we shall always meet at the cross of Christ. Our very sins and imperfections, methinks, should bind us when we bow before the mercy seat.

"It has given me great pleasure to find that you have given full utterance to your feelings. I have no idea of any reserve in that endearing relationship which has commenced between us. There must either be an interchange of the best thoughts and feelings or none at all. We must trade in nothing but the best goods—the choicest and most finished productions of the understanding and the heart. I confess it was one part of my design, in giving you an account of my brief career, to draw forth a similar memoir from yourself. I am glad you have met my wishes without requiring the formality of a request. Take your time over it; be full and copious.

"I certainly wish you had more time for mental improve-

ment, although I imagine your situation is not so unfavourable as you suppose. You must remember that books are not the only, nor perhaps the best, sources from which we derive knowledge. Dr. Johnson tells us that the knowledge obtained from books is strained; and in undergoing this process its strength is impaired, and its beauty obscured. I regard books as valuable, chiefly because they enable us to work upon the materials supplied by the ordinary circumstances of life. Improve what little time you have to the best of your ability, and your acquisitions will be greater than those of females whose whole time is spent in cursory reading.

"Your situation as an instructress will afford you facilities which others do not possess, although you are imparting but the elements of knowledge. Miss B—— is now rising into something like an intellectual existence, and I have no doubt that your efforts to call forth her powers, and 'teach her young ideas how to shoot,' will be a valuable exercise to your own mind. I am aware that perhaps the majority of your profession derive but little benefit from this source, but be it your ambition to rise above the trammels custom has imposed. Were I in your situation, I would get her to commit to memory some of the finest passages of our poetry —to read to you some of our best literature; and I would do my utmost to create in her an interest in these pursuits. No doubt you will encounter difficulties; but the effort to conquer difficulties is one of the finest exercises of the human mind. Besides I am convinced you may easily interest Mrs. B—— in literary pursuits. Although not a great reader, I know she possesses considerable intellect, sensibility, and taste. Her powers only need calling forth. Read to her, or get her to read your books; this will lead you to converse about them; and next to writing, conversation is the best means of turning what you read to good purpose. To realize the fullest improvement both must be

employed. Mr. Priestley and myself spend an hour every night in turning over, by conversation, 'the wondrous knowledge that a day hath won.' "

During the period when the mental powers of an ardent youth are rapidly developing, an excitement is experienced which is apt to vent itself in an offensive, because dogmatic, form. The rush of energy creates dissatisfaction with prevalent quiet notions and methodical movements, and the impulse to do something is interpreted to be a power to do anything. Hence a feeling of self-superiority which only experience—perhaps rough experience—can remedy. Mr. Hessel had possessed a goodly measure of this feeling. Stern experience was now teaching some of her humbling lessons. Oct. 4th. "I feel this morning as if I had never yet known what preaching was. Indeed I have not been preaching, I have been repeating compositions, and those often of the most meagre kind. I have not got to the core of truth, and have been presenting parings only. O how disgusting and ridiculous is the high opinion I have entertained of myself! What a fool have I been for believing the flatteries of weak minds, instead of attending to the palpable evidence of my sad deficiencies. May God save me from that curse—that impassable barrier to all mental and moral advancement—self-complacency!"—Young man! these last three sentences, rightly pondered, may prove more valuable to thee than a mine of gold.

"I have much neglected my Diary and am convinced this is a deep injury. I am certain that if well employed a Journal might be an important means of grace. It has led me to a diligent study of myself—been the means of my becoming acquainted with my own character. I am now convinced of the inaccuracy of Robert Hall's remark. I am aware that the effect of daily putting down a string of common-place phrases can be of little use; but a daily record of the actions and feelings of the soul cannot fail to

be immensely useful. In many instances it will be the means of developing more of the phenomena of the human mind than could be developed by any other process. There is reason to conclude that Edwards' Diary was one great instrument in raising him to that intellectual and moral elevation he attained. In early life he formed the habit of looking steadily at his own soul—and the acuteness and strength of vision required for this could not fail to be highly invigorating."—Robert Hall had "a persuasion that the habit of keeping a regular journal tempted to an artificial tone of expression which did not accord with the actual state of the heart." Like many other things, a Journal is a good or an evil as is the use made of it. If it be employed as a mere register of devotional feeling it will minister to mischief. Christ, not self, is to be the object of our contemplation. Only by "looking unto Jesus" can the soul be kept in a healthy state. Mr. Hessel's Journal however was more a repository of sentiments than experiences. It furnished a convenient outlet for mental energy, and a guage by which he could measure his mental as well as spiritual progress. His mind was under a constraint to utter itself, and utterance in this form was relaxation rather than toil. To him therefore, I believe, it proved highly beneficial. A record made some six months subsequently, must, I think, commend itself to the judgment of all. "By daily noting down my best thoughts I deepen present impression, and cause the light supplied by experience to shine with a more steady lustre. It must be a great advantage to make a visible impress of our views and feelings when in our higher moods. By recurrence to this, the soul's best light and warmest feelings are reflected upon itself."

The steadiness with which he keeps his eye on improvement, and the fertility of his invention to discover means of

securing it, have here an illustration. "I enjoyed considerable freedom in prayer this morning, and I think it was obtained mainly by a determination to say nothing which I did not fully mean. I have been in the habit of using words without attaching any definite meaning to them, and I now see this practice to be highly pernicious. This morning I first considered what I should ask, and then expressed my desire in as few words as possible; mentally dwelling upon it until I realized the importance of the petition. At first I was very slow and seemed as if I had nothing to request, and nothing to say to my Heavenly Father. But desires soon began to spring, and they flowed until they formed a torrent. I hope that this is one means by which God is about to revive His work in my soul.

"I have lately seen the importance of attending much to mental and moral discipline—of acquiring those habits which will secure the greatest possible good. I see it is possible to multiply the means of intellectual improvement to an almost unlimited extent—that one may be continually opening new channels of mental wealth, so that in whatever circumstances we are placed something may be flowing into the mind. I must give up all those employments originating in mere custom and which yield little or no good, and open spheres of operation in which the mental energies shall have full room and adequate motives for exertion. I should like to work habitually under the influence of necessity—to acquire those habits which will render it impossible for me not to be doing or acquiring some good. I would not wish this necessity to be a stern task-master rigidly exacting an unwilling obedience to his laws; but a sweet enchantress whose magic spell irresistibly draws me on the road to eminence.

"Among the employments which have been useless, and I believe decidedly injurious, are the following: 1. Cursory reading. I have read much that has not only done me no

good, but, by forming habits of indistinct conception, great injury. 2. Slovenly attention to the college-studies. Through this I have lost much real knowledge; much mental power; much reputation, and consequently, influence and usefulness, which I can never regain. All this is very humiliating, but I richly deserve all I suffer from it. 3. The habit of preaching the same sermons so frequently. The evils arising from this practice are more than I can enumerate. It produces a limited range of theology; habits of mental inactivity on the Sabbath, which are attended by bad moral consequences; a feigned, unnatural, sleepy, mode of delivering sermons, very much adapted to make the hearers as dul land stupid as myself. It is often the means of causing me to waste Friday night and Saturday, which might be usefully employed in preparing discourses and thus turning to practical account the reading of the week. So long as I continue this practice, I am neglecting to cultivate the talent of public speaking, by which, if I am to be useful at all, a great deal of my usefulness is to be effected."

6th. "Have been thinking much in my walk about my future life—if I am spared. The solemn question whether I am to be useful or useless, presses hard upon me. *Am I now acquiring the elements of usefulness or not?* This is the grand, practical, all-absorbing inquiry. I feel that my time is short; that my part in the great drama of existence will soon be acted; and I am anxious to act it well. I think I never felt with such an emphasis of conviction that *great usefulness can only be secured by intimate communion with the Deity.* He is the great source of moral power—the arm that is not nerved by Him must be powerless. May it be mine to act upon this conviction!"

8th. "I must make more continuous efforts in study, and write complete sermons and essays. If the mind be accustomed only to small acts its action will be feeble. *Great efforts are not only a sign of mental greatness but are*

the means of producing it."—Young man! read these two last sentences again.

"I will set apart some portion of time every month to review my diary and consecrate myself anew to God. I think the last Saturday morning in every month would be the best time. It would be well to take maxims and resolutions on trial for a month, and then make a summary of those I determine to adopt."

"Whenever I feel the least incitement to pray I will cherish it and engage in prayer. I will regard that day as not well spent in which I have not offered up many silent petitions to God. There are numerous occasions every day in which I may do this. In the morning before I leave my bed—when entering the library for morning prayer—on opening a book—when about to mingle with my fellow-students, that my intercourse with them may be a mutual blessing."

> "More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. * * *
> For what are men better than sheep or goats
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
> Both for themselves and those who call them friends."

"Let me never forget that I am to be a preacher of the Gospel—not a poet, a philosopher, an orator, or a mere literary man. Let every book I read have some bearing upon my destination, and whenever I have found that I have got hold of a volume that will do me no ultimate good in that character, I will lay it aside."—This passage suggests one of the secrets by which success in any vocation can alone be secured. Why do so many persons fail in realizing the noble purposes they projected in youth? Because their energies are scattered over too wide a surface. They lack definiteness of object and concentration of effort. Life is too short to permit any man to be

a proficient in every thing. Almost every man who has attained eminence has been a man of one pursuit. It is to this fact, much more than to the inspirations of genius, that we owe that splendid galaxy of names which adorns the pages of British history. In nothing does the wisdom of John Hessel shine more conspicuously than in this: he definitely prescribed what he believed to be his true course, and resolutely determined that all pursuits should contribute to its fulfilment. Learn to say "No," young man, to the enticements of unsuitable books as well as frivolous companions. He who has not learnt to say "No" boldly and perseveringly, is wanting in some of the choicest material of which manliness is made. "Francis Horner, in laying down rules for the cultivation of his mind and character, placed great stress upon the habit of continuous application to one subject for the sake of mastering it thoroughly; confining himself, with this object, to but a few books, and *resisting with the greatest firmness, every approach to a habit of desultory reading.*" Wisely does Mr. Smiles say in his valuable "Self Help," "it is not the quantity of study that one gets through, or the amount of reading, that makes a wise man; but the appositeness of the study to the purpose for which it is pursued; the concentration of the mind upon the subject; and the habitual discipline by which the whole system of mental application is regulated."

The neighbouring places supplied by the students were often at some considerable distance. They were "short journeys" if within six miles—not unfrequently they extended to twenty. A considerable portion of the Saturday and Monday therefore was usually employed in performing the journey—for at that period it had generally to be walked. It will be seen that Mr. Hessel did not regard the time thus spent as necessarily wasted. 9th. "I lose a great deal of time in journeys, and I have

thought of several ways in which it might be improved. I observe that I get much more pleasantly over the ground when I am engaged in deep thought—when my mind is fully occupied with some subject. In future I must keep a sermon paper in my case and put down every valuable thought. By this means the time may be more profitably spent than even in my study, for I have often found walking to excite brilliant ideas. I do not think this plan will harass my mind, for I generally find that I tease myself in my journeys with some profitless subject—such as, how fast can I walk? how soon can I get home? what shall I do when I get there, &c."

During the former part of Mr. Hessel's stay at Sedbergh I was supplying at Kirkby-Stephen, in Westmoreland. Being but fourteen miles apart we exchanged visits. In a few days after my return to College he wrote:—"I have felt very much the want of you since you left. I seem to possess but half an existence. I find these hills and dales and rocks and woods, beautiful as they are, will not answer the purpose of an intelligence. If I speak to them they cannot answer. One mind is worth a universe of matter, into whatever forms of beauty or magnificence it may be cast. Really how absurd the doctrine of materialism does seem! If the mind were formed out of the same materials as these rocks and trees, their common origin would create a mutual sympathy. But the spirit spurns such ignoble alliance, and vindicates the nobility of its origin and the grandeur of its destiny.

"I agree with you as it respects the light in which we ought to view the position we now occupy. There is in some a disposition to rest in the means without reference to the end; I am always leaping to the end, without sufficient attention to the means. This I feel is my bane, and the source of many a failure. This is the quixotism

of real life—attempting the greatest ends without adequate means. I hope, however, these strivings of desire, these pantings of the soul will lead to something good.

"I have been thinking a good deal about our plans. They appear admirably adapted to promote concentration of the mental powers. In addition to all the ordinary means they bring in that immense auxiliary, the social feeling. A principle which operates so powerfully both in civil and religious society, cannot be unefficacious in our case. On the contrary, the more spirits advance in intellectual improvement the more influence will they exercise over each other. I therefore look forward with sanguine expectations to our future intercourse.

"There are three things which I think we should particularly study in conjunction: a passage in the Hebrew Bible or Greek Testament—a subject in theology—and a useful memoir. I would lay down no rigid plan, for I am tired of plan-making; but I think these three departments are so important that we should carry them on simultaneously. In all our studies we should connect variety of means with uniformity of design and end.

"In reading the Scriptures, I have thought we had better spend a week in the Bible and Testament alternately. I should also wish us to have two or three subjects in theology, and to change them every week. This plan, while it would afford full scope for our efforts, would continually excite new interest. The grand desideratum is to place ourselves in such circumstances as shall render it impossible not to take a deep interest in, and fully investigate, the objects of our attention. I have been thinking of Edwards' Memoir. I should wish us to get our minds thoroughly imbued with the spirit of that great man."

The memoir of Jonathan Edwards was read, and amongst other remarks suggested by it, I find the following inquiry:—"What are the peculiar circumstances in the present age,

in my station, which may be seized upon and turned to the best account? It will not do to follow in the track of Edwards. His principles may be adopted, his means of moral and intellectual aggression may be used, but a new course must be struck out—a new field selected. Suppose I select this :—The philosophy of preaching—the best mode of applying truth to the human mind—to strip it of that which has weakened its influence—to give it the most concentration and energy—to ascertain what parts of the human mind are most vulnerable to the sword of the Spirit —or how the different ingredients of the moral medicine must be mingled in order to produce the greatest possible effect. This is a great field, affording at once scope and stimulus. The apparatus must be extensive. It will require, 1. A deep acquaintance with the Bible; a practical knowledge. 2. An intimate knowledge of the human heart. 3. A careful observation of all the great moral phenomena the conduct of mankind has exhibited and is now exhibiting; a knowledge not to be acquired in the study only, but by mingling in the stirring scenes of life. Every fact must be set down in the note book of the mind, and be made to tell in the great plan. 4. A thorough acquaintance with the laws of mind, so far as they are known. 5. The study of the best divines—those whose thought is closest, whose ideas are the most elevated, who view things on the largest scale, such as Howe and Edwards; whose reasoning is the most impassioned—Demosthenian, as Baxter. 6. An acquaintance with the best literature—that language which is the best vehicle of solemn and impassioned thoughts, which tells upon the general mind, which hides itself behind the idea, so as to make it completely fill the spectator's sphere of vision; language which can shift its mode of aggression, and both get at the heart through the understanding, and at the understanding through the heart. This plan has long been in 'my mind's eye;'

it is here but faintly defined, but will be useful."—How many candidates for the Christian Ministry have such a plan in their mind's eye at twenty-one?

15th. "I have observed to-day that one may be too prodigal in communicating ideas. An increase of quantity must always produce a corresponding decrease in value. A few ideas uttered with proper emphasis and tones, leaving sufficient time for the hearer to receive them, will often be more effective than a great profusion."

Though the annexed may probably provoke a smile from some reader, I deem it worth insertion as a revelation of character. 16th. "I have not been careful enough in eating and drinking; last night I took too much supper. I believe these habits increase, so that if I do not check them their power will become tremendous. During the next week then I will endeavour to do better. Until next Saturday I will adhere to the following resolutions: 1. Eat very slowly. 2. Never take more than two cups at breakfast and tea, nor more than one piece of pudding at dinner. 3. Take a moderate piece of bread and half a mug of milk for supper—and never go a second time. 4. If I violate any of these regulations, I will forfeit half a crown to the London Missionary Society."

22nd. "I have this morning had the painful consciousness of indistinctness of mental vision arising from doing things in a hurried manner and having too many objects before the mind at once. Let me observe these two rules: 1. Do one thing at once. 2. Do nothing in a hurry."

On the 25th he writes: "I have tried the plan of the 16th, and have come to this conclusion:—To eat slowly; and in order to do this, engage in conversation as much as possible. 2. *Never to take food when I cannot ask the blessing of God upon it.*"

Here we have noble aspirations, blended with such con-

fessions as only deep searchings of heart could prompt. "In reading over my diary this morning I have had some humbling experiences. O that I could make usefulness the supreme object of my aim! How degrading—how dishonourable to be useless! With what mighty wrestlings of spirit some men have prepared themselves for their work, such as Edwards! what watching, what activity, what study, what prayer! I see nothing of this in myself. I seem to be actuated by a mean, low, paltry, ambition; a desire only to aggrandize myself. Sometimes it appears to me that if I can only compass my own ends—exalt myself a little above my fellow-men—the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls may go. O God, I confess this grievous sin to Thee! In boundless mercy forgive it, and give me a new heart."

26th. "I have thought of a plan by which immense improvement may be realized. It is to write down in my Diary every morning some desirable object to be aimed at during the day—some difficulty to be mastered—some sin to be avoided—some blessing to be prayed for. By confining my attention to one object I shall derive the advantage of concentration. To-day I have resolved to consider the condition of the heathen—to think about them—to read about them—to pray for them."

Nov. 11th. "It is very probable that if we could unravel the complicated thread of God's providential dealings with us, we should meet with a harmonious classification—that those whose moral characters and circumstances were similar are placed under a similar discipline."—In the last member of this sentence Mr. Hessel betrays a confusion of thought unusual with him. Are not "circumstances" discipline? May not the chief disciplinary means employed for our improvement justly come under that denomination? And though God's providential dealings very probably admit of a harmonious classification, it by no means follows that

persons of similar temperament are placed under similar discipline. The love of variety so palpably exhibited in the works and ways of God warrants the belief that characters compounded of precisely similar elements are subjected to varied disciplinary processes.

Here are a few aphorisms on reading well worthy of perusal.

"Unless a book calls into vigorous exercise the faculties to which it is particularly addressed, I do not think it worth reading. A book worth reading ought to have some influence upon the intellect and character. If profit is derived from it, memory will often recur to it; it will have an undisputed place in the mind. There will be a peculiar tone of feeling toward it, like the memory of ancient loves."

"An incessant poring over books is injurious. If the mind be in a state in which neither reason, nor imagination, nor the feelings, can be brought into play, better throw aside a book and commence some other employment. Dull reading is worse than nothing. The practice of half understanding or half feeling the sentiments of an author, is pernicious."

"However short the time for study, the mind must be kept in a state of vigorous activity. One hour of this kind of study is worth five of mere reading. Nay, I would say more; the five may be absolutely injurious; the one *must* be beneficial."

"One great source of intellectual excellence is the faculty of intense attention—of holding the object of mental vision so distinctly and prolongedly before the mind that it may not only obtain a clear view—but experience the requisite

feeling. To this habit cursory reading is most hostile: writing, or something analagous to it, most friendly."

"The value of books depends entirely upon the use we make of them. In reading, the mind does not rest in a simple perception of the ideas which the author communicates, it makes an application to its own purposes of whatever it receives. If two persons read the same book, the results will be widely different. The information communicated will by no means be the same. Each will view the objects from different points. The advantages we derive from books will be modified by our acquaintance with things."

"The chief benefit of books consists, not in the amount of thought they furnish, but in the amount they suggest. The most suggestive writer is the most valuable."

CHAPTER V.

AT HOWDEN. Failure of health—On the method of preparation for the pulpit—Letter to Miss * * —Cause of excessive admiration of the Classics—Baxter—Jonathan Edwards—Distinction between the productions of men of genius and others—Letter to Miss * * —Ruptures a blood vessel—Letter to Miss * * —Impressive observations on the responsibility of the preacher.

THE approach of winter developed indications of disease which, though combated for some time, ultimately proved fatal. Reluctant to believe himself an invalid, he imprudently continued his full course of studies. Toward the close of November, however, increasing debility compelled him to succumb. Removal from the keen air of Undercliffe, and mental repose, were alike requisite. The intelligent society accessible to him at Howden secured for it a preference over Catterton, and knowing that he was always a welcome visitor, he hastened to the home of his uncle Campbell.

"I think I am better this morning than since I left Undercliffe," he wrote to me on the 28th, "but am still very languid. Sometimes I feel as if my frame were dreadfully shattered, and have serious apprehensions as to the result. I find that a light and simple diet, with a good deal of exercise and cheerful society, are necessary for me.

"My stay in this world may be short, I want to make the best use of it. I feel that if ever I am to be useful my conduct must have a new bias—my character must be moulded afresh. I want more decision—more energy—more concentration. I often think that if some new influence could come upon my spirit by which its latent powers would be educed—if I could only feel the powers of the

worlds of light and darkness to come upon me and occupy the whole sphere of vision, enabling me to see every object of time by the strong piercing light of eternity, what a revolution would take place in my character!"—True. And what hindered this? Mainly the absence of clear perceptions of the means by which it was to be secured. He subsequently saw that the realization of eternal things, which prayer and effort will enable any of us to effect, was all he needed.

Dec. 1st. "I am guilty of neglect in prayer. I too often regard it as an incidental instead of a serious duty. This is a bad habit. I wish to attempt an improvement in my conversation. This I need in every respect. My style is careless and broken, and by no means as finished as it might be. My manner is often blunt, and produces a bad impression upon strangers. I do not sufficiently introduce religious subjects in my conversation. These are great evils, and greatly limit my influence."

The accompanying sentiment was "proved," I have no doubt, and is worthy of being ranked with the things we are commanded to "hold fast:"—9th. "I see more than ever that little confidence is to be placed in the reasonings of the mind when a morbid sensibility upon the subject of thought has been generated. If even the logical process should be right, there will be such a selection of premises as will materially affect the conclusion. When the mind is in that state there are certain feelings which must be gratified, and they cheat reason out of her power. It is true they allow her to sit on the throne, and invest her with formal authority, but their decrees determine her decisions." —It will be asked how is the victim of this morbid sensibility to be convinced of the fact? I suppose Mr. Hessel would say, past experience may awaken surmise at all events.

10th. "How much the character is modified by the objects with which we are daily conversant! When we

associate only with the mean, a corresponding vulgarity and meanness are acquired. Of course there are exceptions. There are spirits whose circumstances seem to forbid elevation, who nevertheless elevate themselves. But the great mass of mankind are moulded by the associations into which they are thrown. All are susceptible of refinement, and all require cultivation, but some possess an inherent energy which constrains them to cultivate themselves." —He is not a man, but a tool, who surrenders himself to circumstances. It is in every man's power so far to control circumstances as to make them tributary to his highest welfare. He may be unable to reap from them the particular good he desires, but it will be his own fault if he does not reap from them good of another, possibly of a higher, kind. Your vocation, my young friend, may be mean, but by bringing noble aims to it, it shall become elevating. The following occurrence shows that a chimney-sweeper may be a man of elevated sentiments. The philanthropic Jonas Hanway, while exerting himself on behalf of the little sweeps, one day said to a little fellow who had been sweeping a chimney in his house, "suppose now I give you a shilling?" "God Almighty bless your honour, and thank you." "And what if I give you a fine tie-wig to wear on May-day, which is just at hand?" "Ah, bless your honour! my master won't let me go out on May-day." "No! why not?" "He says *it's low life.*"

"In the religious experience of many persons of eminent piety we find a gloom. Brainerd and Dr. Payson are instances. It is highly probable that ignorance of the laws of their physical nature was the cause. Their extreme fasting must have had a dreadfully depressing influence upon the nervous system. By their excess in this they generated a morbid sensibility in the brain."—Possibly a morbid sensibility was inherited.

"There is a power of impregnating the materials around us with intelligence—of making every object vocal. Our Saviour had this in a wonderful degree. He made the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field to speak."—Every truly devout man of intelligence has something of this power. The habitual recognition of the fact that every thing in nature is but a manifestation of its glorious Creator begets and nourishes this power. Its possession constitutes one of the chief elements in the poet.

12th. "There is great art in living well—in making every thought and word and action tend to some good end. *I have a standard of excellence before my eyes continually,* which I am now panting to attain. It always haunts me, and shows the measure of my deficiency every day."—In these few lines we are furnished with the cause which contributed chiefly to the maturity of Mr. Hessel's mind. It is impossible to estimate the influence which would be exerted by this fact. Nor is it easy to exaggerate the importance of imitating such a practice. The reason why a higher standard of excellence is not more generally reached is because it is not generally aimed at; or if aimed at, is not defined with sufficient clearness. Let the mind have an object vividly and constantly before it fitted to interest and exercise its faculties, and you place it under the dominion of a law similar to that by which the needle is attracted by the magnet. How much wiser is this method than the one so generally prevalent of attempting to force the mind! The only difficulty is in selecting a proper standard and placing it at a proper elevation.

Perhaps some youthful reader has an imperfect idea of a 'standard.' Furnish yourself with pen, ink, and paper, and write down every quality entering into your idea of the character of a good and useful man. Be as minute in your description as you can. Then write down, as an incentive to imitation, all the benefits you deem such a man will

enjoy and confer, and all the evils he will escape and be enabled to avert. Contemplate the character you have sketched till your admiration becomes ardent. Begin in good earnest to acquire and exhibit every one of its features, giving your chief attention to those you know to be most difficult but most important. Compare yourself daily with your model, and while you grieve over your failures, do not yield to discouragement.

> "Pitch thy behaviour low, thy projects high,
> So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be.
> Sink not in spirit; who aimeth at the sky
> Shoots higher much than he that means a tree."

"The whole creation is a material for us to work upon. The elements of nature are susceptible of endless modifications. If we select those objects adapted to the eye and ear, we see how numerous are the sources of enjoyment God has provided for us. What objects of beauty may be made from combinations of form and colour! What exhaustless variety is there in sound! The most insignificant thing may be made an object of interest."—"The whole creation is a material for us to work upon," not merely however for the sake of finding enjoyment, but as the means of unfolding our varied capabilities. Much too contracted a view is taken by those who regard our world as designed only or chiefly for our enjoyment. It is a mental and moral training-school. Its multiform objects and pursuits are as palpably intended, as they are admirably adapted, to awaken observation; excite inquiry; promote reflection; cultivate taste; stimulate ingenuity; furnish scope and incentive for the exercise of active and passive virtues;—in short to summon to vigorous action all our powers, so that we may acquire a character of mental strength and moral beauty, which shall be a treasure and a joy to us for ever. Young reader, this life is thy seed-time for eternity. '*Whatsoever* a man soweth *that* shall he also reap.'"

13th. "The work of preaching is one of such paramount importance, that no means should be neglected which will promote its efficiency. The mode of preparation must have an immense influence upon preaching. I have wished to make the pulpit the centre of all my movements. All my labours, designs, and attainments, I wish to point there. My grand object is to bring out all my powers in that sphere of action. Hitherto I have missed my way in many important points. The means of improvement are of a very complex character. There must be many distinct departments carrying on at the same time. All the faculties must be trained so as to develope themselves in the best manner in the pulpit. I must learn to be *at home* there, or I shall never do much good. My present mode creates an insuperable barrier to advancement, for it overtaxes one faculty and leaves the others unemployed. This cannot be right, and therefore I must try a different plan. I have thought that if, instead of writing my sermons, I employed a naked outline of thought in the form of broken composition, the memory would be relieved of a burden of words, and the other faculties of the mind would operate with unrestrained energy. But in order to keep up my style, I would also write the sermon out after I had preached it. The advantages accruing from this course would be immense.

"The order of preparation should be something like this. Select a passage, examine it critically, and mark the parallel passages. After you have analysed it, take a synthetic view, and the subject will generally rise before you in logical order. The mind will then become interested. Illustrations will present themselves. You will feel it almost impossible not to write. Write out a few paragraphs until the thought comes too fast to be fully expressed. You may then be content with brief notations. Such a sketch must often be reviewed before preaching; you must be completely master of it, or you will be unable to speak with confidence."

—Sermonizing is one of those things which admits of no rules of universal application. The best mode is that which enables a man to express his thoughts most perspicuously and forcibly, and experience alone can teach him this. If a man's thoughts come slowly or mistily he must write. If they flow rapidly and clearly he will have no necessity to write much. What should be aimed at is to guard against the evils and secure the benefits of each of the two modes. The man who accustoms himself to what is called the *memoriter* mode will be likely to be a more correct and full, though a more stiff and formal, speaker. The man who practises what is called the *extemporaneous* mode will be a more ready, free, natural, and effective speaker, though less concentration of thought and less instruction will characterize his discourses. The plan mentioned above is a medium. It secures a deposit in the mental treasury, while the particular form of the draught is left for circumstances to determine.

Important as the *mode* of preparation for the pulpit is, its importance may be easily exaggerated. The power of a man's preaching does not depend on his sermon being written or unwritten. David Stoner and John Smith furnish two modern illustrations of the truth of this. Both produced mighty effects upon their congregations; the former with carefully-prepared compositions, the latter with discourses of which but a small part was written. He who is baptized with an absorbing solicitude for the salvation of his hearers, will soon ascertain in what way he can most effectually bring truth to bear upon their consciences.

In a letter to Miss * *, dated Howden Dec. 14th, he says: "Although the morning is so beautiful, and every thing around me is adapted to produce cheerfulness, I do not feel as I ought. I have risen 'as from unrest' and feel considerable languor, arising probably from the exertions of last night. I have dreamt a great deal about you, and perhaps that is the reason I have now taken up my

pen. It may not be improper to tell you, what is much more important, that I have prayed for you. I trust I have been enabled to get near a throne of grace on your behalf, and have made requests which our Heavenly Father will not deny. I sometimes think that if our acquaintance answered no other purpose than to call forth our prayers for each other's welfare, we should have reason to review it with gratitude through eternity.

"I believe few Christians have any adequate idea of the wondrous power of prayer. I feel as if a mighty instrument of usefulness had long lain beside me unemployed. Sometimes I am awakened to a sense of my indifference and folly, and attempt to use it, but through the benumbing influence of those 'things which are seen and temporal,' I yield to my former listlessness. How strange that we do not believe the God of truth! He has said 'ask and ye shall receive.' How simple the statement! How plain the direction! How firm the promise! May you and I be among the number who believe it.

"I have of late been very much impressed with the importance of making our connection as much as possible a religious one. If we are united in common love to the Saviour, our attachment will be founded upon an immovable basis. All inferior ties will be broken by death, but this will remain for ever. I have the firmest belief that alliances of this character will be continued beyond the grave. The constitution of our rational nature warrants such a conclusion. Beyond a doubt memory will be a great source of happiness in a future state. The recollection of mutual intercourse upon spiritual subjects, and mutual prayers, must afford great happiness; and we cannot think with pleasure upon these without experiencing peculiar emotions towards those who shared them with us. This is a delightful idea. It often affords me great consolation."

On the 16th he writes in his Journal: "A low standard

of religion does immense injury. Some seem as if they wished to retain as many sins and imperfections as are barely consistent with the possession of religion. There is reason to fear that many are deceiving themselves by making the practice of the church, instead of the precepts of God's word, the standard of their piety."—The importance of a diligent study of the Scriptures—not a mere perusal—can scarcely be too urgently enforced. The tendency to formalism is not the only evil we have to shun. Our great spiritual adversary will tempt us to adopt as chief incentives to religious duties those which ought to be subordinate, and thus make truth do the work of error. Is not this extensively the case? Is not religion popularly regarded as a benefit to be received, rather than a service to be rendered? That it is profitable for both worlds the declarations of Scripture, and the facts of daily life, attest. But to make this *the* reason of our seeking its possession is highly mischevious. It fosters the selfishness Christianity is designed to destroy. "Seek first the kingdom of God"—that is, make the universal recognition of Divine rule and authority the supreme business of life—was the utterance of our blessed Lord in His first public discourse. That the Apostles thus represented Christ's claims, the whole tenor of their epistles declares. "He died for all" says the greatest of them, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." His own practice, he tells us, was in harmony with this declaration, "For to me to live is Christ." Abandonment of self-seeking, and renunciation of self-will, are everywhere represented in Scripture as essential to Christian character. Religion should be regarded therefore as devotedness to God, and all its benefits as expressions of Divine beneficence. This is the only view that tends to expansion of heart, elevation of character, and the practical adoption of Christ's philanthropic purposes. When this

is the popular idea, we shall have, without any diminution of happiness, far more Christian activity and usefulness. Christianity will then have an exemplification worthy of it; and never till then.

"It is no small attainment in wisdom to estimate aright the relative importance of the varied objects claiming our attention. A single day's observation will furnish numerous instances where things insignificant are magnified into an undue importance, and things of vast moment treated with comparative neglect. These remarks are emphatically applicable to the controversies which have taken place in the church. It is extremely difficult to make a minor point a matter of dispute, and not to raise it from its proper place in the Christian economy. We can grasp only a portion of the truth and we are too apt to mistake that for the whole. It is quite possible to fall into practical error while contending for truth. A custom or a ceremony may be right, but in our eagerness to defend it we may exalt it to an importance which will be wrong. All the parts should have a harmonious relation to each other; as the painters say, they should be in proper keeping—and it is not easy to meddle with them without disturbing their harmony."—What section of the church may not ponder this with profit? Episcopalian and Presbyterian; Congregationalist and the admirer of the Connexional principle; Pædo-baptist and Anti-Pædo-baptist; Calvinist and Arminian, may all profit by candid reflection on this passage.

21. "It has often struck me that the excessive admiration of the classics which some men exhibit, results from the exercise of translation. Not that the classics are unworthy of great admiration. That man must be destitute of all taste who can see no beauty in Virgil or sublimity in Homer. But there is an undue attachment which prevents a right appreciation of other literature. We often meet

with men rendering a homage to ancient authors which they deny to moderns of equal excellence. This is accounted for when we consider that in translation the mind is brought into close contact with the beautiful images which many of the ancient productions present, and by this process it surveys them leisurely, and comes under the full power of their beauty."

22. "In some of our more sombre moments, feelings arise which language cannot define, and which are totally different from those ordinarily experienced. The mind looks round the earth in quest of something that may fill its capacities and gratify its desires. It sees and feels that imperfection is stamped upon all sublunary objects, and is disappointed. It retires within itself, but even there something is wanting. It feels its own weakness; it needs something to rest upon. There is but one source to which it can turn—that is the supreme excellence. In God it finds every thing it needs. The sentiments of admiration have full scope. The more ardently the affections cling to this glorious object the more happiness is realized. The more eagerly our souls desire created good, the greater is the sense of vacancy, the more keenly are the unsatisfied cravings of the spirit felt. But as it regards God it is quite the reverse. The more intense our desire the more complete the satisfaction. The spirit may take its fill—the appetite can never be cloyed. If the mind were surrounded by an assemblage of excellence brought from every part of the creation—if the riches of the universe were employed to form a rare combination of beauty and splendour, and the soul were left to luxuriate and revel in, and as much as possible possess, all this, yet still there would be something wanting. There might be an addition to this collection of created good. The mind would perceive this, and could not but wish for something more. In proportion

to the strength of the desire already gratified would be the wish that was ungratified. If I possessed twice as much as I do now my desires for still greater possession would be doubled by such increase. But how delightful is the idea that when we take God for our portion we take an infinite good! Let our wishes stretch as far as they will, let our desires be beyond any thing we can at present conceive, yet not one desire shall remain unsatisfied."

"Among all divines, not one, in my estimation, equals Baxter for practical utility. The more I read the better I like him. He was possessed of those rare qualities which fit a man for moving the spirits of his fellow-men. You never find Baxter asleep; his spirit possessed a restless energy which kept himself and every one else awake. There is much poetry in many of his productions, especially his 'Saints' Rest.' With all his quaintness it is possible to select many passages from his works not excelled by any in our language. But the art of persuasion was his forte. No man was ever more successful in arranging the moral apparatus of the preacher, and causing it to operate with power. He is particularly distinguished for keeping his end in view; he even makes his very aberrations the means of forwarding his grand object. Few men have appealed to the conscience with such power as he. He held it beneath his hand, and his hearers felt they could not elude his grasp. Its subtle, delicate workings appeared to be visible to him. Perhaps it was in this sphere that his judgment was best exercised. He often got wrong in other matters, but he was generally right here. To use a homely expression, 'he hit the right nail on the head.'

"There is a remarkable unity of design in the writings of Edwards. He appears to have no collateral object in view. He cannot even cast his eye aside to look at the effort he is making when his gigantic energies are being put

forth. He seems to be unconscious that *he* is engaged, and never contemplates his exertions in relation either to his own opinion of them or to that of other men. In the race of reason his keen eye is fixed upon the goal, and never does he allow the most transient glance at any other object. If he gained his point he placed not the least value upon the apparatus; to him it appeared as mere scaffolding, to be thrown aside when the building was completed. He was a logician and a philosopher, but he felt himself only a divine."

23. "There is this distinction between the productions of men of genius and those of ordinary men—the former are selections from a profusion; the latter are collections of all the riches the mind has accumulated. The former are perplexed how to choose their materials, the latter how to obtain them. The separate parts of two works produced by the two classes may perhaps be equally excellent, but taken as a whole they never can be. There will always be a symmetry, a beauty, a resemblance to nature, in the simplest effusions of a man of genius which effort cannot produce. Indeed the compositions of inferior minds are imitations of the works of those of a higher order."

In a letter to Miss * * of the above date, he says:—"Thank you for your kind letter. We indeed know not what may transpire before we meet again. It is well to keep this idea in mind, to watch with a jealous eye the earthly supports upon which our spirits rest. When I attempt to scan the future, to estimate the tendencies of my own nature, to calculate the probabilities of life, and to mark out for myself a sphere of action—when I have fixed the scene, drawn the outline, and filled it up with the colouring of imagination, and then perceive the numerous contingencies before me, I begin to tremble. But when from this harassing employment I turn my eye to the God who has guided me 'even from my infant days;' when I

remember His character and gracious promises, my anxiety subsides. I throw myself upon Him and my mind is filled with peace. It is a profitless employment to speculate upon the future. It is a mercy we have not to order our own destiny, for we should speedily ruin ourselves. We have only to perform our duty and leave the rest to God.

"I hope your health is improved by your visit to G——. Do, my dear C——, take care of it. We are apt to think little of slight indisposition, but we should remember that the most dreadful diseases are often merely an aggregation of little derangements. Take plenty of recreation, for you require it. Do not let your new plans of study injure you. I hope nothing I have said respecting mental improvement will induce you to neglect your health. I firmly believe that strength of mind will often depend, in a great measure, upon strength of body—at least upon the vigorous state of the organs of thought, and they have an intimate connection with the whole system. I again urge upon you the grand means of securing health—two hours daily exercise in the open air. You may not secure health by this, but it is certain you cannot without it."

25th. "I passed a wood yesterday composed principally of birch trees, whose delicate twigs were beautifully covered with hoar frost. The effect was most poetical. The whole seemed the work of enchantment. There are some phenomena of nature which people in general little notice, but which make a deep impression on my mind. Whenever an object or a scene has peculiarly struck me, I visit it in imagination for months after. I need not tell you that the pleasures arising from this source are of a refined character. This every true lover of nature must feel."

On the 28th he wrote in his Journal: "It requires a very strong effort of reason to stand against the influence of imagination. As is the colouring it imparts every object

appears bright or gloomy—lit up with radiance or covered with a funeral pall. It is unlikely that reason will reach precisely the same conclusion in both these cases. Its conclusions when imagination sheds brightness, will be different from those arrived at when it spreads gloom. Hence arise many of the errors of mankind. Men are blinded by the hallucinations of the mighty enchantress. Each thinks himself right when perhaps all are wrong."

The next letter I received contained deeply painful intelligence. It is dated Dec. 31st. "When I got home on Monday night, on going to bed I was troubled with a cough, accompanied with expectoration of blood. I suppose it arose from a rupture of one of the pulmonary vessels. I have bled considerably since.

"As I am not allowed to talk I read a little. The Bible and Baxter's Saints' Rest are my favourite books. I am reading John's history of our Saviour. It never appeared so interesting to me as now. The diversified features of His lovely and glorious character are peculiarly developed in John's Gospel. I love to dwell upon His very words; more of His character is to be understood from them than from any description which can be given. O! if I could be constantly, absolutely assured of my interest in the love of this great and glorious Being, I should be completely happy! But in my gloomy moments doubts will arise. What! if after all, this admiration of the Redeemer should only be mere intellectual excitement! I sometimes reason myself into despondency, but come to the determination that if I never made right application before, I will make it now. The prayer of the publican I feel to be most appropriate."—Mr. Hessel had not been taught to expect the blessing of assurance. The religious persons with whom he had associated regarded this as the privilege of a favoured few. His views on this, as on some other doctrinal subjects, altered considerably during the two subsequent years, and

he experienced the truth of what he here affirms as to the happiness caused by such attestation. Satan is robbing many good people of much enjoyment and power for usefulness, by persuading them to live in destitution of this blessing. It cannot be denied to be a "good thing." Assuredly therefore it comes within the range of the declaration recorded by David: "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Not less assuredly does it come within the range of that cheering declaration of our blessed Lord: "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" Christian reader, do not dishonour God by entertaining low expectations of His beneficence.—Mr. Hessel's apprehension lest his admiration of the Redeemer should be a mere intellectual excitement is an indication of the sincerity of his religious character, no less than of his correct perception of the nature of religion. And his wisdom in resolving to make prompt application for spiritual good, instead of parleying with the tempter as to whether application had ever been previously made, deserves high commendation. Doubting Christian, go and do likewise.

Jan. 1st, 1836. "The commencement of another year brings with it many solemn reflections. It may be the last new year's day I shall see. I wish to lay myself entirely in the hands of God—every breath I draw I wish to be one of submission to His will. I hope that His interests, His ends, and mine, are one. I want to have no design that shall contravene His. This I find sometimes to be extremely difficult. This depraved nature is very obstinate and self-willed. Nothing but the Holy Spirit can subdue these fearful tendencies."—At a subsequent period he would have freely criticized the sentence "I hope I feel, &c." Is not feeling, he would have said, as much a matter of consciousness as walking, and would it not appear

ridiculous for any person to say, 'I hope I am walking?' It is well to guard against presumption, but let us not indulge in a phraseology which nourishes unbelief.

2nd. "Quite a change in the weather this morning. The snow is descending in beautiful white flakes. Nature is putting on her white robes to celebrate her marriage with winter. I love to witness the celebration of the nuptials although the lovers appear very cold. But I am getting quite poetical, and poetry comes very ungracefully from my lips. My clownish addresses are rejected by the muse. At the same time I do not envy her fastidious love. She may lavish it upon her minions as she pleases, she will not break my heart.

"I have had a restless night although no return of the bleeding. I hope in a few days I shall be able to walk about. I am surrounded with mercies, but alas, how ungrateful! There will be no ingratitude in heaven. The redeemed can never reproach themselves with that vile sin. That is a delightful thought.

"My aunt Campbell left this morning, so I am quite alone. There is an empty arm-chair opposite me, I wish you were in it. It is superfluous to say that I should like very much to see you. It gives me great pleasure to know that I have an interest in your sympathy and prayers. Prayer I believe will be heard. I often condemn myself for not being sufficiently earnest in my requests at a throne of grace for those who are dear to me. What a mysterious nature is ours! How strange, inconsistent, and inexplicable! How comes it to pass that rational creatures can so lose sight of the great end of existence?"

On the same day he wrote to Miss * * :—"With feelings of a very mingled character I sit down to answer your letter. I have been much pained to think of the pain I have caused you. I believe you feel more deeply for me than my nature will allow me to feel for you. I am not ac-

quainted with all the deep mysteries of woman's heart, but I think they are worth learning. I am much affected with the sympathy you manifest, and could almost wish it were not so deep. It has been painful to me of late to think, that instead of increasing your happiness I have added to your trouble. I fear my last letter would have no tendency to relieve you of the burden. I have promised to tell you the truth, and you may still rest assured that I will not deceive you relative to my health. When I last wrote I was under apprehensions that my indisposition was incipient consumption, and I wished to prepare you for the consequences. I have now reason to hope those apprehensions were groundless. The bleeding was considerable—I should think not less than a quart—but my medical man tells me that this is a far more favourable symptom than slight and continued expectoration of blood. It has now ceased.

"I quite agree with your opinion respecting the formation of a lasting union where there is indication of fatal disease on either side. No thought is more painful to my mind than that of leaving you a helpless widow. You may deem it strange, but I think I would almost sooner lose than leave you. But I think your conjectures are too melancholy. I have great reason to hope that I shall once more enjoy good health.

"I have lately been reading John's Gospel. It gives by far the most complete exhibition of our Saviour's character. There was evidently a personal friendship between John and the Redeemer—he was 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' And for this reason, no doubt, he has been selected to write the most important parts of Revelation. The other evangelists wrote the actions of our Lord; John described His mind and heart. There is more of pure revelation in his writings than in all the rest put together: more propositions that are beyond the reach of reason. I often think he must have felt very peculiar emotions when he met his

Lord in the isle of Patmos. At the last supper he leaned upon Jesus' breast; but there he 'fell before Him as one that was dead.' What a glorious change had passed upon his friend! so great that his imperfect nature could not bear to look on it. There is a sublime and ravishing mystery in these things which sometimes almost overwhelms me. O what a contrast between these objects and the materials for contemplation which the world affords. Here the spirit has free scope: its very noblest powers have ample room for exercise. The sentiments of admiration and the emotions of love find an object commensurate with their capacity. Christ is indeed "the bread of life," and with Him the hungry soul is satisfied. May you and I learn more of His character! The more we are acquainted with this common friend the more shall we love each other.

"I am glad you so much admire Mrs. Judson. She was a most devoted woman. You cannot afford my heart a more exquisite gratification than by imitating her high example. *One of the most powerful agents in the formation of character is admiration.* We cannot intensely admire the great and good without becoming in some measure assimilated to them. Hence the importance of always keeping models of excellence before our eye. They are the patterns from which we shall weave the web of our existence. 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise.'"

No observant reader will believe that the portrait here introduced is drawn by fancy's pencil. Many will be able to refer to persons who might have sat for it. It will be more profitable however to inquire "Lord is it I?" 3rd. "There is a class of persons whose religion consists in talking about the religion of other people. They substitute the admiration of what is excellent in others for the possession of excellence in themselves. They are amazingly prompt in deciding respecting the characters of their fellow-men. Their favourite topic is the sins and imperfections of profes-

sors of religion. You will sometimes find them taking delight in the idolatrous exaltation of some favourite minister to the depreciation of almost every other. If you converse with them on the great truths of religion you will soon discover a sad deficiency. The repetition of a few common-place sentiments, without the least sensibility, is all you can procure. If you wish to dwell upon any given subject they will soon flinch, and with wonderful facility start away from things to persons. They are remarkably insensible to 'the *beauty* of holiness.' They evidently see in Christ no beauty that they should desire Him. Were He again to appear upon earth He would be the last person in whose company they would mingle. His light would reveal their darkness; His beauty expose their deformity, and their pride would be sorely wounded. They would discover some fault in Him, and, like the Jews of old, despise and reject Him. This is one of the most awful states into which our nature can fall."

4th. "Christ did not enter upon His ministry till He was thirty years of age. During that time, no doubt His mind was in a course of preparation. We have every reason to conclude that it went through all those processes of advancement by which great and good men have attained wisdom, only He had the advantages of superior enlightenment from above. Methinks there could not have been a more interesting sight in the universe than to have observed those silent workings of the spirit by which, during His residence beneath His reputed father's roof, He prepared Himself for His great and arduous work."

5th. "The life of Mackintosh is very interesting. His mind is of a very high order. It has a beautiful symmetry which cannot fail to charm the eye of the discriminating observer. Everything he wrote bore the mark of genius—not genius wild, luxuriant, and unrestrained, but under a

state of severe cultivation. He was emphatically a philosopher. His understanding was not only strong but fine and delicate. His mind did not take its character from the associations into which he happened to be thrown, but sought out congenial objects, and selected from the multifarious elements of thought, those adapted to its purpose. It did not exert itself merely for the sake of exertion. It drew its inspiration from the objects of beauty which it loved to contemplate."

The following extract will be read with special interest by the preacher of the Gospel. The reader who was in the habit of hearing Mr. Hessel towards the close of his life, will think that there was no faint resemblance between the delineation here given of what a minister should be, and what he himself was. "I imagine myself in the pulpit, and I look around on the congregation. It presents a varied appearance—human nature is exhibited under many forms. There are young and old, rich and poor, learned and illiterate. I inquire what are these beings? For what are they come? And what must I say to them? If I glance into futurity, I see at the distance of a century, every one of them in a state of unspeakable happiness or misery. Long before that time I shall be in another world, where, in all probability, I shall see some of them. The truth I utter must have an influence upon their future destiny. I am placed here to distribute the elements of life. To some perhaps they will become the means of death; for such fearful transmutations oft take place. Since then I sustain such a relationship to these spirits, does it not become a momentous inquiry: how shall I fulfil the responsibilities of that relation?

"I have stationed myself where the destinies of immortal souls hang upon my conduct. I might have occupied one of those seats. But since I have voluntarily taken this position, should it not create a deep seriousness of spirit, a thrilling anxiety as to the result of my efforts, a yearning

desire that they may have a happy issue—a desire that shall be absorbing, shall make me feel as if I had no interest apart from that of these immortal spirits?

"I feel a tendency to treat the whole affair with indifference, to pass it over as one among a series of acts which form the routine of human existence. I come here to preach a sermon; they are come to hear one; and that is all. But instantly I check the indulgence of such reflections. A multitude of spirit-stirring inquiries present themselves. Are eternity, and heaven, and hell, objects to be viewed with indifference? Does not the fearful doom of perhaps a majority of those now before me affect me? Can I think of the miseries of a lost soul (and, O terrible thought, there is reason to fear that some of those who hear me this night will be lost) and feel no emotions of pity? Do not the bowels of common humanity yearn over the unconverted, exposed as they are to evils too appalling to contemplate? My soul feels the awful justice of these sentiments; and I am convinced that to dismiss them would be a profanation of the place in which I stand, and a violation of the character I sustain. But what is the character of that preaching whose tone shall be in harmony with these sentiments?

"I endeavour to place myself out of myself, and to picture the man I should be this night. In imagination I leave the pulpit and seat myself among the audience. I observe the preacher enter the sacred place, and watch every step, and mark every movement of his countenance. He moves as if he were upon some great business. There is a seriousness about his demeanour which the spectators feel. His entrance produces a change in their emotions. If emotions and thoughts could take a visible form, those of a worldly character would be seen to vanish, and deep solemnity to take their place. I see him seated in the pulpit. He does not look like an ordinary man. There is a solemn, unearthly anxiety in his look. All the powers of his mind appear

concentrated upon one object, far different from any sublunary care. He has been in a higher region. His spirit reflects the light of heaven and reveals the darkness of hell. He glances at the assembly, and how expressive is that glance! His hearers feel that their best interests are dear to him. He opens the sacred volume, and all listen as if God Himself were speaking. He announces the subject of discourse. It is an important one; a practical one, in which all must feel interested. In commencing he is deeply serious, although far from being loud and boisterous. His thoughts and feelings at first escape in gentle accents. He addresses the understanding, knowing that persons require to be informed before they can be excited. His descriptions are clear. His pictures are vivid. His aim is direct. His hearers cannot mistake him. They feel the tendency of his thoughts, they eagerly anticipate his object. There is no dry detail; no eccentric starting from the line his solemn circumstances have marked out. As he proceeds he gathers a mysterious energy. The light he scattered now diffuses heat. He draws the curtain which conceals the invisible. The busy scenes of earth vanish. Heaven and hell are revealed. Every countenance reflects the light of the one or the gloom of the other. There is not a careless or inattentive hearer; all are constrained to look in the direction he points. He now feels he has got access to their inmost souls and does not fail to improve the precious moment. He urges the things which 'belong to their peace.' With resistless eagerness he presses the inquiry 'what must I do to be saved?' He appeals to conscience in a tone which compels response. The affections and passions are aroused. Love, and fear, and hope, start from their slumbers, and the whole moral being becomes intensely awake.—Such is the man I ought to be. 'Who is sufficient for these things?'"

CHAPTER VI.

AT HOWDEN. Character of his reading—The joy derivable from the Divine Omnipresence—Remarks on affliction—Death preferable to uselessness—A Presence which pervades creation—No disgrace in industry—Comparison of Howe and Owen—The design and proper mode of education—Aphorisms on the communication of thought as a means of improvement.

SUNNY moments, in which subjects previously wrapped in gloom appear distinct and radiant, visit every mind. Reflecting minds often experience periods when mental energy flows with tidal force. Such a period Mr. Hessel was now experiencing. No sooner had he arrived at Howden, than he began to feel the invigorating influence of balmy air and agreeable society upon both body and mind. The latter gradually recovered its elasticity, and soon exhibited a vigour which he never greatly surpassed, and a fertility which he never afterwards equalled. Between the 5th of Dec. and the 20th of Feb., he filled a 12mo. memorandum book containing 177 pages, 35 lines in a page. He sometimes wrote from seven to ten pages a day, besides letters to his friends. The subjects on which he wrote were extremely varied, suggested partly by what he was reading.

Some index to the character of his mind will be furnished by a knowledge of his reading at this period. I find a paper dated Aug. 8th, 1836, and headed: "Reading during the last eight months.—Howe on delighting in God. Living Temple (part). First and last volume of Robert Hall's works. Jeremy Taylor's Sermons (2 vols). Barrow's Sermons (1 vol). Chalmers' Sermons (1 vol). Edwards' Sermons (a few). Foster's Essays (carefully). Greater part of Baxter's Saint's Rest. Life of Baxter—of Urquahart

—of Dr. Mason Good—of Cowper—of Sir James Mackintosh—of Owen—of Jonathan Edwards (greater part)—of Boswell's Life of Johnson (1 vol.)—of Burns. Good's Book of Nature (2 vols). Butler's Analogy. Combe's Physiology, &c. Brigham on the Influence of Mental Cultivation, &c. Ramidge on Consumption. Dick on the Improvement of Mankind. Pye Smith's Scripture Testimony (1 vol). Horne's Introduction (some parts). Reed and Matheson's Visit to the American Churches (greater part). Brown's Philosophy of the Human Mind (part). Mackintosh's History of England (first vol). Random Recollections of the House of Commons. Characteristics of Goethe by Mrs. Austin. Howitt's Book of the Seasons (greater part). Milton's Prose Works (several pieces). Abbott's Corner Stone. China and the English. Cowper's Letters.—Poems (more than half). Paradise Lost (greater part). Some parts of Shakspeare—together with several other volumes, also numerous articles from Blackwood—Edinbro' Review—Metropolitan—Quarterly—Eclectic, and many little things I cannot remember."

"The following division has struck me," says he, in some observations headed "Mind."—"1. The moral faculties; requiring daily exercise in prayer and praise to God, and in deeds of benevolence to man. They must be cultivated by the Scriptures and the agency of the Spirit. 2. The intellectual faculties. Vigorous efforts of reason—exercise in consecutive thinking. The acquirement of new ideas from the various sources of information. The exercise of imagination in forming new combinations of ideas. 3. The social faculties. The gift of speech is the principal instrument in turning all the other faculties to good account. Power of reason, splendour of imagination, or copiousness of information, will be of little avail unless we are able to communicate. But practice alone can enable us to do this. A day should

never be spent without talking a great deal. The social circle is a fine sphere for the development of the human mind. We must mark the effects of conversation, and discover the best modes of access to the minds of men. We must converse with all kinds of men; for one class will call the powers into partial exercise only. There are various means of communicating ideas, each of which requires a different exercise of the faculties. The intimate converse of friendship—the interchanges of thought in the domestic circle—intercourse with the world in general, in which conversation must be engaged in with caution and prudence—public speaking, where minds of almost every grade are addressed. To acquire excellence in these varied spheres is an object worthy of much labour."

Jan. 10th. "The omnipresence of God is replete with consolation. We all know the feeling inspired by the presence of a dear friend. I remember when in sickness, danger, or distress, a visit from one endeared to me has produced a total change in my feelings. Sickness has abated, the sense of danger has been removed, the anguish of an almost broken heart has been soothed. But in our everlasting friend, all the qualities which afford consolation and enjoyment are infinite. What then ought to be the consolation arising from the sense of His presence? The idea is unutterable. There is no real necessity ever to be unhappy."

In a letter to me, dated Howden, Jan. 15th, he says:—"You will be surprised to find me here again—you see I move about like an ignis fatuus, although I hope I do not shed its illusive light. I am happy to say that my health is much better, although I am far from well. I have had no return of the bleeding but have a sense of weakness. If I study for any length of time the old pain returns to my head, and I am obliged to desist. I am subject to great nervous depression, although I take as much exercise as I

can well bear. My appetite is generally good, especially at night, but I do not think proper to gratify it.

"I know not how to express my obligation for the interest you take in me; the idea of your sympathy and prayers often consoles me. I believe your requests have been heard in my partial restoration. I thank you for your views on affliction. They have long been familiar but they cannot be presented in too many aspects. But still, my dear friend, while I agree with you in general, that these trials are the appropriate portion of the people of God, and that they are sent in mercy, at the same time I feel that my sins have brought them upon me. Even mercy is obliged to employ the hand of justice to execute her designs. But it is consoling to know that justice is only her delegate, and acts under her control. I am much afraid I have not profited by affliction. If my depravity should transmute these 'blessings in disguise' into curses, how fearful must be the consequences! Sometimes I fancy I am improved, but often fear that increased nervous sensibility is the only change. There is great danger of mistaking an alteration of the physical condition for a change in the moral nature."

—The views on affliction to which I had given utterance to my friend, were those then current. Subsequent reading and reflection however, have led me to doubt their correctness. I am satisfied that health may be retained by the employment of suitable means, and that its failure is to be attributed to physical causes generally lying within our control. Afflictions, excepting those inherited, come from God just in the same way as poverty comes upon a man who neglects his business—as a punishment, certainly, but a punishment naturally consequent on his own conduct, and which therefore he might ordinarily have avoided. "Let it never be forgotton," says Dr. Combe, in his valuable work on the Physiological and Moral Management of Infancy, "that disease and untimely death are the results, not of

chance, or of any abstract necessity, but simply of the infringement of the *conditions* on which God has decreed the welfare of the various organs of the body to depend, and the implicit requirement to observe which has therefore been appropriately named the *organic law.* When these conditions are fulfilled, health is preserved. When they are neglected or infringed, the action of the organ is impeded or disordered, or, in other words, *disease* begins." * * * "To this view of the general origin of disease, it has been objected, that it must be erroneous and dangerous, because it is at variance with the doctrine inculcated by some divines that diseases are specially sent by a kind Providence exclusively for spiritual purposes, and have no reference to any merely physical errors or omissions on our part. But this objection seems to me to arise from too narrow a conception of the workings of God's providence, and to be itself contradicted by daily and hourly experience, and by the habitual conduct of mankind. If we adopt the principle that disease is altogether independent of physical care, and is sent for exclusively moral ends, it unavoidably follows that physical exposure or protection must be without influence on health; and that wet or cold, gluttony and starvation, temperance and dissipation, care and neglect, will act injuriously, not according to any fixed laws, but simply according to the spiritual necessities of the individual. On this view any attempt to improve human health by regular attention to cleanliness, temperance, exercise, and pure air, must be futile, as the result will in no way be affected by such attention, but depend on moral conditions alone. On this theory vaccination itself must be regarded as an absurdity, and those must be the most healthy whose whole minds are devoted most exclusively to religious and moral duties and contemplations, without regard to any physical observances.

"If this theory be correct, by what laws is the health of

the countless multitudes regulated who never heard of Christianity, and who cannot, by possibility, be aware of any spiritual object in sickness?" "Universal experience demonstrates that *health is affected by our own conduct, and is under the influence of fixed laws;* and there is not a living being who does not act habitually and instinctively on the faith of this being the case."

By some, these observations may be regarded as at variance with such passages of Holy Writ as these: "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Ps. cxix. 75. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Heb. xii. 6. There is not the slightest evidence, however, that bodily afflictions are meant in either of these passages, or in any similar passage. In the latter of them the context clearly evinces that reproaches and persecutions are meant. That God can send bodily afflictions in a direct way, is not doubted; that those ordinarily experienced come thus, there is strong reason to disbelieve.

Some indication of the bitterness of affliction to the devoted minister of Christ, as well as of Mr. Hessel's solicitude for usefulness, is furnished in this passage: 17th. "I cannot be happy without preaching. I feel an intense, irrepressible desire to address my fellow-men upon their most important concerns."

20th. "I have been more than ever impressed to-night with the importance of aiming at *direct* usefulness. I see that *life may be spent in mere preparations for doing good.*"

21st. "Signs of thought must have thought attached to them or they are of no value. Every word must have some precise signification. There should be a reason why this word is selected in preference to that, however similar the

meaning may be."—Few studies are more important to real progress in knowledge than that of words. An invaluable aid has recently been furnished by Dean Trench in a little book entitled "On the study of Words." The youthful reader who has not seen it, has but little conception of the interest and instruction connected with what he probably regards as a dry study. Another little book entitled "A Selection of English Synonyms," edited by Archbishop Whately, is of scarcely less value.

24th. "I have long been cultivating my understanding, it is now high time I began to cultivate my heart. It is a fearful thing to contemplate divine truth without suitable emotions."

"It is possible to retain every fact if only it be well impressed upon the mind. The power of retention depends upon the strength of impression. An object cannot be too distinctly perceived or too vividly apprehended. A few deep impressions are better than many faint ones."

27th. "It is necessary to understand many things which need not be made objects of direct study. To a mind in earnest pursuit of the most important truth, many collateral truths will present themselves. It is a great blessing when we can see at a glance what most demands our attention. Minds that have no correct perception of the relation which different objects sustain to each other, may be made to work in any direction. They possess a capacity for exertion without the requisite skill. They will expend as much strength over the most insignificant as over the most important objects."

Feb. 1st. "I have been peculiarly impressed with the importance of living more to God. *I want to have no business upon earth but to find out His will and do it.* I often ask myself: What is the usual tenor of my thoughts? What way do my affections habitually incline? *We had far better die than live to be useless.*"—Let not the

invalid conclude that activity is essential to usefulness. By the exhibition of patience and resignation a confirmed invalid may be of great use; and he has special facility for wielding "the omnipotence of prayer."

6th. "I had a delightful walk this morning along-side the river from Booth Ferry to Howden Dike. The tide was returning; the packets and vessels floated majestically; the sun tinged the mass of rolling waters with his golden hues, and rendered the whole scene exhilarating. I felt the animation which seemed to pervade every object, and my spirits bounded with more than wonted buoyancy. There sometimes appears to me to be a *something* pervading creation half-spiritual and half-material—partly heavenly and partly earthly; and impressing its ever varying conceptions and feelings upon the visible face of nature. It is this which gives surrounding objects their beauty. Take away this and the universe would appear like a corpse."—Was he indebted for this thought to those lines of Wordsworth, of which James Montgomery says: "Language more exquisitely elaborate, and thoughts more patiently worked out of the very marble of the mind are rarely to be met with." I cannot say Yes. I dare not say No.

——— "I have learn'd
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity;
Not harsh and grating, tho' of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A Presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts;——a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is—the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky—and *in* the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls thro' all things."

10th. "There are many situations which might be filled with great advantage by the educated and intelligent but which this class of persons refuse to take. This is a serious evil. A large amount of talent is left without employment, and important positions are occupied by unqualified persons. Notwithstanding the number of governesses, really intelligent persons of this class are very much wanted. It is to be hoped that the foolish prejudices which have hitherto prevailed are diminishing. *What disgrace can there be in industry?* What dignity in idleness?"

16th. "We are in danger of being too much influenced by current opinions on many important subjects. The prevalent standard of excellence is low, and if we do not elevate it we shall not rise above the general level. Those who would be greatly good must not be afraid of singularity. When singularity is sought for its own sake, however, it is contemptible."

Mr. Hessel devoted considerable attention both to the Hebrew and Greek languages during this season of retirement. Many critical remarks are interspersed throughout his Journals showing how thoroughly he entered into their study. The following extract evinces that he was no mere mechanical labourer in this department: "By associating the Hebrew words with the ideas they designate, the operations of memory will be facilitated, and the mental process will be natural, easy, and interesting. On this ground I much prefer the complete examination of a passage to the cursory mode of merely ascertaining the grammatical meaning of the words. Not that I would neglect the grammatical meaning, for by all means that should be ascertained; but in order to render the acquirement of grammatical knowledge more interesting, and the whole study more profitable, I would connect it with the theological. I adopt

this plan upon the principle of applying to practical use every thing susceptible of such application."

18th. "Study *subjects*. By this means a system of theology will be formed gradually, on the principle of attending to the most important things first. I should prefer beginning with the central truths in theology. We cannot do better than observe the order in which we become practically acquainted with divine truth. In its study the moral feelings should always be consulted, for without them the operations of the intellect will be in a great measure profitless. There are several things in religion I feel an ardent desire to know; why should I leave these and turn to others that excite no peculiar interest, and thus lose the advantage the present state of my mind would afford? I do not despise or neglect system, but every man should have a system of his own. It should arise out of the gradual advance of the mind, and be constructed according to the order of nature."

21st. "I have had considerable enjoyment this morning in prayer. I do hope I am advancing in religion; at the same time I express this opinion with fear and trembling. I feel I have a heart that can transmute the very best blessings into evils. Thus I often find that if God softens and humbles me, I soon make that humility an occasion of pride. But I feel a growing desire to dwell more upon divine things, and behold new beauties in them every day. Even while I write a rich, deep, tender feeling of love to the Divine character pervades my soul. May God increase it every day."—Every Christian experiences these gushes of religious sensibility. Does not every hearer of the gospel? Can they be satisfactorily attributed to any other cause than the agency of the Holy Ghost?

March 4th. "To study the scriptures successfully we

must read them variously. I want to imbibe the *spirit* of the divine word, to have it thoroughly ingrafted and made part of my nature. God must be my teacher. I see that without that delicate spiritual perception which His Spirit alone can impart, the Bible must be read comparatively in vain."

8th. "I have not half the affection for the people to whom I preach which I ought to have. From the tone of my feelings towards them, every sermon must undoubtedly take its character. Let me aim then to keep their best interests at heart, and be anxious to profit, rather than to please them. Let me often think of them—make myself acquainted with them—pray for them. This is the only way to do them good."

9th. "I have sometimes thought that the setting apart of a certain portion of time for prayer and reading the Scriptures each day, had a tendency to produce formality. But though we may sometimes be formal in the discharge of these duties, this is better than neglect of them. At that very time, in all probability, if the mind were not thus engaged, it would be dwelling upon something far less profitable."

"I have just taken tea and seated myself comfortably upon the sofa," he writes in a letter to me on the 15th, "and was reflecting upon the chequered scenes of human life, and 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy,' when I was aroused from my musings by the remembrance of my promise. I have stepped into my study to put down some of my many thoughts respecting subjects which concern us both, but I am sorry to say they have fled. However, like Anthony in speaking, I must write 'straight on;' and perhaps some of the fugitives will be attracted by the movements of my pen. I read, and write, and walk as

usual. My existence now glides along as smoothly as the retreating tide when unruffled by the wind. In general I am calm and happy, and if now and then a bitter blast sweeps across my spirit its agitations soon subside. I do not remember a period when I have enjoyed so much peace of mind as lately. I have been blessed with a happy freedom from annoyance without and agitation within. I attribute much of this change to a more diligent study of God's word and such writers as Howe. There is a peculiar moral elevation in his views. In company with him I get away from earth to regions where the atmosphere is pure and clear, where the sun shines brighter, and both earth and heaven appear in their due proportions—the one shrinking into insignificance, and the other beaming with a glory which fills the soul.

"I have been reading a life of Owen in which the author places him before Howe. I never did much admire Owen. I have tried but cannot. There is a cloudiness, a verbosity about him, a working out his meaning with infinite labour. Reading Owen is like walking out in a cloudy morning—there is light enough to distinguish the outlines of objects but not to exhibit their complete beauty. Reading Howe is like walking when the sun shines from a cloudless sky and reveals the manifold beauties of nature. Both were great men, born to enlighten the world; but Owen is a clouded, Howe an unclouded, sun.

"I don't know how it is I have stumbled upon these divines, for I set out with the intention of writing upon more private concernments. But perhaps I never felt the difficulty of marking the boundaries of τα ιδια so much as now. Sometimes it seems as if every thing belongs to me and I belong to every thing. In gazing upon a beautiful landscape, and marking the rich variety of crops with which it is adorned, gratifying the sense of beauty to the full, and revelling in delicious reverie, I have often thought

that I have reaped as large a harvest from it as the owner. It is possible to make the whole universe our own. But more than this—we can make God our own, and what need we more if we possess the Supreme Good?

"For some time past I have been rejoicing in the consciousness of restored health, but how possible it is to be deceived! To my great surprise I had a return of the expectoration of blood this morning. It was only a small quantity, but it gives no favourable indication of the state of my lungs.

"I should like us to have more communication with each other. I have been thinking that if we both kept a kind of Journal it would afford us mutual benefit and pleasure. I often wish to say a few words to you, but shrink from the effort of formally commencing a letter. If you approve of the plan let me know in your next. There is no necessity for a daily record. Write when it is convenient."

Here are two extracts on education which well merit the attention of parents and teachers. The former relates principally to the design of education, the latter to the manner in which it should be conducted:—"Many seem to have forgotten the end of education. The object is *the harmonious development of all the capacities and susceptibilities of human nature.* What is the precise cultivation under which the mind will be best unfolded is an inquiry not easy to answer in definite terms. General principles may be laid down but the difficulty lies in their application. If every mind be educated in the best possible way, no two will receive precisely the same treatment. Such a state of perfection cannot however be looked for, yet we ought to make as near an approach to it as possible. There is a radical error in many plans pursued. It has been the aim of teachers to bend the minds of their pupils to their system of discipline, instead of adapting the means of moral and in-

tellectual culture as far as possible to the peculiarities of each pupil. The results flowing from such a course are highly injurious, especially upon spirits of refined sensibility."

"In effecting any change in human character, it is best to follow out as far as possible the laws which regulate our existence. When those laws are neglected, or their operations crossed by artificial arrangements, many evils must follow. In nothing, perhaps, is this truth more exemplified than in the culture of the human mind. The Creator has communicated to man certain faculties which require culture in order to their full manifestation. The objects and scenes with which he is connected are designed to exercise those faculties, and as they are various so should be his circumstances. One faculty should not be cultivated at the expense of the rest. The reasoning powers should not be exercised so as to destroy the fairer and more delicate productions of imagination. Memory should not usurp the place of judgment. The mental powers should not wither up the gentler faculties of our social nature. If the social feelings be not cultivated all other culture will be comparatively useless, for it is only by coming in contact with our fellow-men that we can hope to benefit and improve them. But these feelings can find their proper scope and stimulus in actual society only. If they are developed in an artificial community they will be cast in a mould not adapted to mankind in general. Upon these principles I think that those who recommend seclusion from the world in the improvement of the intellect have made a great mistake. In the attempt to raise one part of the structure to an unnatural height they throw down all the rest, and even render that comparatively useless."

I here present a number of terse utterances bearing on the importance of communicating thought:—

"Endeavour to be always either gaining or communi-

cating knowledge. Communication is as important as acquisition. It relieves the mind, gives a new tone to its energies, and prepares it for renewed exertion. It gives a complete command over our intellectual resources. Many kinds of truth are incomplete until they are invested with the colouring of emotion."

"Thought improves and strengthens by expression. A good habit of expression can be acquired only by constant practice. Hold communication with every class. They all reflect your ideas and thus impart additional light."

"Thought is most powerful in a condensed form. The analogy of nature supports this view. Our Saviour's ministry presents a striking example. Matured wisdom appears to prefer this mode of developing itself. The man who uses fewest waste words wields the greatest power."

"In composition exhibit only results; they are all that men in general care about. If the heaps of lumber accumulated in many books were removed, but little would be left. It is the *spirit* of men's writings we should seize. A few sentences will often convey whole pages of the lucubrations of learned heads."

"Style must be formed by writing much with a clear head and warm heart. Perspicuity and energy will then be secured. If only my mind can be brought to operate with ease and vigour, it will spontaneously select the best words. I detest sentences of a measured length. Nature indicates an intermixture of long and short. Sometimes one wants to represent thought by a single stroke; at other times it is necessary minutely to delineate its features."

"Conversation and writing express the thoughts of the human mind; music its feelings. It gives vent to those deep, mysterious, and delicate emotions of the soul which words cannot represent."

CHAPTER VII.

AT HOWDEN. One characteristic of genius—The influence of a good thought incalculable—The Elizabethan writers—His distribution of time—Action an important means of moral improvement—Early rising—The sure and only means of avoiding rash judgments—Aphorisms relative to mental and moral habits.

DURING the last two months Mr. Hessel had been giving the reins to his intellectual energies much too freely. The expectoration of blood he mentions in the preceding chapter was no doubt punitive as well as monitory. We cannot over-draw at the physical, any more than at the commercial, treasury, without re-payment, with large, sometimes enormous, interest. Though he had no attack of hemorrhage he was for some months the victim of considerable debility. His Journal supplies palpable proof of this. It required the time between the 28th of Feb. and the 3rd of Nov. to fill a memorandum book of the same size as the one he had previously filled between the 5th of Dec. and the 20th of Feb. No entry is of any considerable length. Occasionally there is a record to this effect :—"Have not much strength for study. Severe mental efforts lay me prostrate."

15th. "Material for reflection is what I want. It is folly in me to encumber myself with many things that may be useful to others. There is danger of being led astray by others, and thus not arriving at that precise sphere for which I am most fitted."

16th. "It is surprising to notice the different associations which different minds form. To some men one cannot speak with ardour on any subject, but some term employed

will excite a number of degrading associations never contemplated. These minds, unable to catch the scope and aim of the speaker, select some part of his description which they wrest from its purpose, invest with their own degrading imagery, and then cavil at it."

"If one's circumstances are not of a character to kindle ardour it is well to create such if possible. Fairly commit yourself, and then summon every energy to meet the exigency."

"The illumination of the Spirit is worth more than all the books in the world as an aid to the knowledge of those truths which most concern me. *Why should I be so anxious for human, and so indifferent to Divine, knowledge?* My aim as to this world shall be humble, in order that it may take a sublime flight into that which is to come."

"There are many delusions in the world; I wish to see through them. The high opinions of others can do me no real good unless I possess genuine excellence. I trust I can say before God that I had much rather be *felt* by my fellow-men than talked of by them."

21st. "Draw maps upon the tablet for recreation—an excellent plan to learn geography by amusement."

25th. "Genius feels its own wants and finds means to supply them. It cultivates itself. It may avail itself of the assistance of other minds, but can never submit to their control. By the law of nature it gains the ascendancy."

"Learning is useless unless applied to the practical purposes of life. Let me seek to make immediate good use of all I acquire. The more I turn it over the more good it will do to others, and the more valuable it will become to myself."—The first sentence of this paragraph needs qualification. It by no means follows that because the Latin, Greek, and Euclid, which a youth has acquired, cannot be

subsequently turned to any practical purpose, it is therefore useless. Such learning is invaluable as a disciplinary and invigorating process. Mr. Hessel doubtless meant to protest against the acquisition of learning merely for its own sake. And thus viewed the sentence merits approval.

"The influence of a good thought is incalculable. What mighty effects have the fragments of our Saviour's ministry produced in the world! One single idea may determine a destiny."—Yes, not one destiny but many. A religious tract was one day picked up in a barrack-yard by a soldier. That tract led to that soldier's conversion. He became an able minister of the gospel; was elevated to a high ecclesiastical position; wrote one of the ablest modern treatises on the evidences of Christianity; and has been instrumental in turning many to righteousness. That soldier is now the celebrated Bishop Mac Ilvaine.

The following is the Journal he mentioned in his last letter to me:—March 28th "I have been lately led to think less of formal treatises and more of those incidental remains of human thought which the great and good have left us. Sacred writ consists of fragments; and though replete with beauties of every description, much of it is at the farthest remove from elaborate composition. The writers of the Elizabethan era were almost compelled to wield the pen. They were placed in situations which fired their spirits, and their immortal works were wrested from them by the force of circumstances. There are few ingenious minds conversant with the writers of that period who do not seek to imbibe something of their spirit. The clearness with which they viewed truth, the firmness with which they grasped it, and the manliness with which they contended for it, gave to their writings a value which places them at the head of our national literature. We live in a different age. The public mind flows in a new direction, and all who aim to be instructors must adapt themselves to present exi-

gencies. The man who has half the eye of a philosopher must see that the metaphysical treatises of the period to which I have referred are not adapted to our age. Truth, instead of the garb of a fiery disputant, must put on a vestment of simplicity. *There is no power more to be coveted than that of rendering important truths interesting to the community.* You may write and speak after the most approved models—your arrangement of thought may be severely correct—your discourses may be constructed upon the strictest logical principles, but after all, what advantages worth naming are secured if the people will not hear you. There is danger lest, under the idea of mental cultivation, we abandon nature. I have no doubt that many minds have been injured by such cultivation. The fair and healthy plant, which under favourable auspices might have grown to a stately tree, has been cropped into a dwarfish shrub.

"I deem it advisable never to write without some worthy object, believing that the value of our compositions will be as are the ends at which we aim. In seeking mental and moral improvement, it is not enough that we attend to the operations of our minds, we should place ourselves amid such influences as will excite our best faculties. I have found that sentiments which have begged as it were for communication, have been much more valuable than those elicited by effort."

April 5th. "I have been unusually impressed of late with the importance of serving God with all my powers. My heart has been peculiarly softened; ambitious and unholy feelings have been subdued, and heavenly affections strengthened. I have had more ardent longings after excellence, and an unusual spirit of prayer has been imparted. I have sometimes been unable to utter my feelings, but in a silent agony of supplication have thrown myself at the feet of the Divine Majesty and wept. I need not tell you

that these are tears of rich enjoyment. I have also felt the tone of my sentiments towards my fellow-men to alter. I feel a deeper interest in them, and those statements of our Saviour's strong affection for men, 'and he had compassion on the multitude,' &c., much affect me. I blame myself for not preaching in the villages, and am purposing to labour more in this way. These are gratifying symptoms; and though I feel great pleasure in mentioning them to you, I write with fear and trembling lest the future should evince that this is but a momentary excitement. I can tell these things to you. No being beside yourself, save one, must know them. And that one has more to do with my present state of mind than perhaps you are aware. A short time ago I stated to my dear C—— some of my principal sins, temptations, and wants, and begged her to make them the subject of special prayer. I cannot but think our united petitions have been heard.

"By observation and experience I think I have formed something like a plan of study. It recognises what in most systems of education appears to be overlooked, that the organs of mind are subject to the same general law with every other part of the physical system. In developing my mental faculties I seek variety, harmony, and naturalness of operation. I propose pursuits which the mind has the fullest conviction will repay its efforts, and it wants no other stimulus. I follow one employment until I am tired, and then exchange it; taking care to do every thing well however small the quantity, for I am convinced that it is only what the mind fairly grasps and fully enjoys which will be of ultimate value."—It was wise in Mr. Hessel, with his disciplined mind, to "follow one employment until tired and then exchange it," but it would be very unwise for an undisciplined youth to imitate him. Such a mind soon wearies of application, and to humour is to ruin it.

"In general I rise between five and six," he proceeds: "I first read a chapter in the Bible, and afterwards pray; then a portion of the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament alternately. Until breakfast I read some book of Biblical criticism or that class of writings, such as Horne; at present I have Pye Smith. After breakfast one of the old divines; then I take a walk; then read a portion of History, Science, or Philosophy, &c. At present I have Mackintosh's England and Good's Book of Nature on the way. I spend a short time in devotion before dinner, which I think of great use in restoring the mind to a right tone. After dinner some work in general literature; then biography. I have been reading Baxter's life. I take a walk again; a Greek or Latin author; then tea. My evenings are so various that I can give no account of them, although I both write and read a great deal after tea."

The following characteristic passage will prove valuable to the plodder, who is too often wanting in enterprise. It is far from suitable to the volatile, and especially to him who, in spite of friends and foes, believes himself a genius. "Always think it possible to find out something new. Never suppose there is not a more excellent way. When the mind is extremely satisfied regard it with suspicion. Rather think it has brought the standard down than risen up to it. Take it for granted that some of the best things are yet undiscovered."

April 5th. "One thing in the writings of the Apostle Paul has peculiarly struck me. He seemed to think little about places where he might labour. He was not anxious to fix his residence here or there, but wherever he went he preached the Gospel. This is just the spirit I want."

"Action is the great means of moral improvement. This is the medium through which the Holy Spirit operates."—

No sentence in this volume is more pregnant with important truth to the church of Christ than the former of these. Would that every Christian professor would test its truth for himself! From what numerous lamentations of unfruitfulness, from what oppressive hours of doubt and sadness, would he be saved! And what an influx of joyous emotion would often be experienced! How much more favourably would religion appear in the eyes of the world! And how much greater progress would it make!

"Wake, thou that sleepest in enchanted bowers,
Lest those lost years should haunt thee on the night
When death is waiting for thy numbered hours
To take their swift and everlasting flight;
Wake, ere the earth-born charm unnerve thee quite,
And be thy thoughts to work divine addressed;
Do something—do it soon—with all thy might;
An angel's wing would droop if long at rest,
And God Himself, inactive, were no longer blessed.

"Rouse to some work of high and holy love,
And thou an angel's happiness shalt know,—
Shalt bless the earth while in the world above;
The good begun by thee shall onward flow
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;
The seed, that, in these few and fleeting hours,
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,
And yield thee fruits divine in heaven's immortal bowers."

9th. "I have felt the importance of giving to life the character of business, and of making the varied pursuits of each day a matter of obligation. *Let me live with this impression, that there is some one thing I ought now to be doing,* and that if I omit it, it never can be done, and that consequently not only it, but all the good consequences which might result from it will be lost for ever. In deciding what I am to do in any given case, always make a deliberate appeal to reason and conscience. Consult my own interests in relation to the whole duration of my being.

Seriously ask myself the question: What, upon the whole, is best to be done in this case? I think I shall not often find difficulty in answering it. The difficulty often arises from a moral cause—a reluctance to act according to the verdict pronounced."

"In order to detect error it is necessary to be thoroughly grounded in the truth. It is not well for young minds to busy themselves with controverted points. They are not qualified for this until they have made themselves masters of a pretty large field of certain truth. To call judgment into such exercise before it has attained strength and maturity, is the direct way to weaken it. Besides, matters of controversy are much more easily decided afterwards. A matured judgment will often detect by a single glance what else would have required long study."

"Truth, in this world, is a poor dejected maiden—pure, indeed, as the lily. But she will not always wear this dejected mien. She is destined to shine in majesty upon a radiant throne before which all shall bow, and render a willing or unwilling homage. Those who have protected and defended her in her low estate shall have an exalted place in her court, and share her immortal honours."

14th. "A rainy afternoon, but still the scene before me is refreshing to the soul—the trees just bursting into leaf and dripping with rain; the grass plot green, fresh, luxuriant, and glistening with moisture, which in countless drops trembles upon the delicate spires. At the far end, a long row of daisies bow their heads in thankfulness for the bounty of heaven."

17th. "Had more than usual enjoyment in prayer this morning. Our Saviour's 'Sermon on the Mount' interested me much. How forgetful I am of that which ought to be constantly remembered. I have a perverse

inclination to walk in any direction but the straight-forward path of duty. What need for watchfulness and prayer!"

23rd. "I have not cultivated the eloquence of the parlour. There is an easy, affable mode of address which I greatly lack. There is a tact of speaking a word in season, and giving a tone and direction to the thoughts of others without their perceiving it, more valuable than the most splendid attainments."

"I think I never saw so clearly as now the vast importance of *early rising*. I am certain it is the only sure ground of my success in study. I find that *if the faculties are vigorously exerted in the morning they are in better condition through the day*. Had I only from five to eight every morning for study, a respectable standing in the ministry might be maintained."—It is scarcely possible to attach too much importance to this habit. I once heard an intelligent person say that he never knew a greatly good man that was not an early riser. It is certain that the habit is highly favourable to health, to mental vigour, and to spiritual advancement, and no one therefore wishing largely to secure these benefits will live in its wilful neglect. It has been estimated that "the difference between rising every morning at six and at eight, in the course of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same time he otherwise would, amounts to 29,000 hours, or three years 121 days and 16 hours, which will afford eight hours a day for exactly ten years." What a large portion of time for an accountable creature to waste! But it is worse than wasted; for, says the celebrated Dr. Cheyne: "nothing can be more prejudicial to tender constitutions, studious and contemplative persons, than lying long in bed, lolling and soaking in sheets after one is distinctly awake, or has slept a due and reasonable time. It necessarily thickens the juices, enervates the solids, and weakens the constitution. A free open air is a kind of cold bath,

especially after rising out of a warm bed, and consequently makes the circulation brisker and more complete, and braces up the solids, while lying in bed dissolves and soaks them in moisture. This is evident from the appetite and hunger which those that rise early feel beyond that which they get by lying long in bed." The practice needs no further recommendation than the simple statement that no one ever regretted its adoption. I would strongly urge the reader who may need some stimulus in the formation of this habit, to read Mr. Wesley's sermon on "Redeeming the Time."

26th. "Rose at six. Felt some irritation this morning but have been able to overcome it. Been troubled with anxious thoughts about my future lot. I retired for devotion and was enabled to cast all my care upon God. These words have very much supported me: 'they that seek the Lord shall not want any good.' My future destiny is no concern of mine. All I have to do is to seek the Lord."

Nothing ever proceeded from his pen more characteristic than the following:—27th. "In thinking or speaking of any class of persons among whom I have not mingled much, let me remember that it is probable I may have an erroneous idea of them. Be particularly careful to ground no conclusions upon narrow and imperfect views, either of persons or things. This course will lead to truth and charity."—We cannot avoid receiving impressions as to the character of those with whom we come in contact, but these can never be confidently relied on until they have been often repeated. Every man varies in his moods, and the impression we receive of him at one time, under one class of circumstances, will sometimes be the very opposite of that we should receive at another time, under another class of circumstances. And not only so, but our impressions will be influenced by the states of our own mind.

Nor should it be forgotten that the particular features of character which a stranger exhibits to us, depends greatly on those which we exhibit to him. Man, in his social nature, is like one of those flowers which discloses itself in a genial atmosphere, but folds its leaves and conceals its beauties on the approach of an unfriendly breeze. Our impressions of character therefore depend greatly upon ourselves.

Here is a string of aphorisms relating chiefly to mental and moral habits.

"An acquaintance with the first principles of many subjects will have a tendency to consolidate all one reads into an harmonious system. There is a tendency to forget first principles."

"Have such an arrangement of the mental economy that the results of observation may be deposited in their right place, and be always ready for use."

"I can do nothing unless I get my studies into order. Then only my eye is clear and my arm strong. I cannot proceed effectually unless I know in what part of the regions of knowledge I am. I like always to have one central thing upon which my attention is concentrated."

"It is of the utmost importance to have the plan of life distinctly laid down, to have the boundaries of that plan well defined, and always to keep the grand ultimate object of pursuit vividly in view. This has been the case with those men who have shone so conspicuously—who have astonished and blessed the world through which they passed with rapid march to a glorious immortality."

"Give the intellectual power the sovereignty, but keep imagination, taste, &c., like a well-trained army in its service. Edward's reason sat solitary upon the throne—no courtiers. It became a tyrant, and spread around it the gloom of tyranny."

"Always aim to give supreme attention to the thing in hand. Suffer nothing to tempt the mind away from it. In nothing does the student suffer so much as in feebleness and irresolution of purpose."

"In a course of sound study there must be much self-denial. Almost every hour wandering desires must be restrained, and strong propensities crossed."

"If I give up daily labour, combined with a habit of repose upon the Eternal, there is no hope for me. Both greatness and goodness are an aggregate—the result of daily accumulation."

"It is far better to do a little well than attempt too much. *Be careful about the quality, quantity will increase in due time.*"

"It is desirable to cultivate a state of mind that will attract whatever is good, and repel whatever is evil."

"He has made no mean attainment who can go to every subject with the sole purpose of finding out the truth. The cultivation of this spirit will do more towards attaining the great end of study than the most rigid discipline of the intellect."

"There is danger of looking at truth through a contracted medium—from one point of observation only. Nothing can so effectually correct this as extensive intercourse with the world. There is much to be learnt everywhere. It is a valuable mental exercise to find out sources of information and means of improvement out of the beaten path. Let us make the best of those circumstances into which we may be thrown."

"We must be in private what we wish to be in public. If we attempt before others that which we do not cultivate when alone, we shall be almost sure to fail. The discern-

ing will see that such things do not sit easy upon us—that they are foreign to our character."

"Those who devote themselves to mental pursuits should seek great variety of employment, for thus only can over-taxation of the brain be avoided. The amazing acquirements of some military and business men abundantly prove that if the bodily organs be vigorously exercised, the brain is capable of great efforts."

"The proportionate cultivation of our faculties is necessary to intellectual happiness. Much of the ill-nature and misery of studious men arises from straining some faculties and leaving others unemployed."

"He is a noble man who seeks—
  Mid the world's love, toil, and strife,—
Right; and giveth, as he speaks,
  Thought to thought, and life to life.

Ever in his onward way
  Beauty, grandeur, he descries,—
Or in summer's azure day
  Or in winter's stormy skies."

CHAPTER VIII.

AT HOWDEN. Termination of his correspondence with Miss * * —Consults a London physician respecting his health—On the range of pulpit-topics—His resignation to the Divine will—Southey's Life of Cowper—Foster's Essays—Bloomfield's Greek Testament—Difficulty of accurately judging the motives of others—Prayer an aid to study—Didactic and devotional aphorisms.

ALL the anxiety Mr. Hessel had felt, and which a young man of his powers and purposes could not but feel, from the dark shadow cast upon the future by his precarious state of health, was "a thing of nought" compared with what he was now called to experience. Enough of his correspondence with Miss * * has been published to show the strength as well as purity of that attachment. "I trust my dear C—," he had said, to give one quotation more, "we shall have reason to bless God, both in time and eternity, that ever we became acquainted. Our connection has arisen purely out of esteem and affection; it owes its origin to no extraneous influence. I feel that this gives a nobility to love. The interchange of good is equal. You have it in your power to make me happy by offering those sympathies of the heart which wealth cannot purchase, and which I greatly need; and I hope to be able to extend over you my sheltering care. How wisely our Creator has constituted our nature, and what happiness may be realized when it is not perverted by sin!" Such had been his feelings. And now the connection was to terminate. Those tender bonds were to be severed. There was no rupture—no alienation of feeling on either side. It was his own deed; done at the bidding of what he believed to be stern duty, and with the full approval, if not

at the recommendation, of his friends. It cost him, however, a struggle and a pang. On the 10th of April he writes, and the "hand" indicates the agitation of the heart: "This connection must be broken. Both her happiness and my own demand it. Yes—it must be—tho' it rend every fibre of my heart. O thou great Searcher of hearts, I appeal to thee! Thou knowest what have been my thoughts and feelings, and what are my motives in this determination." The sudden annihilation of those bright pictures of domestic enjoyment fancy had often painted, was but a small part of this trial. His social nature found in that intimacy a stimulus and outlet highly beneficial.

He communicated the intelligence to me in a letter from Howden dated April 30th: "I fear you will think I have forgotten you, it is now so long since I wrote. I have been about to write several times but could not brace my mind to the effort. You will not be surprised when you have read this letter. I have passed through severe trials of late. I often wished to pour my sorrows into your friendly ear, but dreaded to harrow up my feelings afresh by a recital of them.

"My hopes of recovery, I now believe, have been unfounded. More decided symptoms of pulmonary disease have been manifested of late. You know there was one tie—one dear tender tie bound me to earth; *that* I have felt it my duty to sever. I will not attempt to tell you what the effort has cost. I found that my health materially affected hers, and I could not bear the idea of dragging her along with me to the grave. I saw it was best to part. Those of our friends who knew of the connection had long been of that opinion; and after many painful struggles the correspondence from which we both anticipated so much has been closed.

"I leave you to judge what I have suffered. I feel it my duty to watch over my feelings with sternness. I am

an altered man. Sorrow has imparted a marble chillness to my soul; and yet I feel at times as if I should melt with tenderness. My general state is that of calm contented melancholy. My trials are mingled with mercies, and I have now the firmest persuasion that all these things will work together for good.

"You will naturally inquire what I intend to do in future. Perhaps I ought not to use the word 'do,' when I have so much reason to apprehend that it now only remains for me to suffer. I have given up all thoughts of returning to Airedale. A residence in the south seems desirable, but the expense would exceed my means. I think I could perform the pulpit duties of a small place, and ministerial engagements would probably be beneficial. I may be deceiving myself as to my competency for preaching, but I should like to try. The idea of being silent is very painful. Some of the first physicians have recommended moderate exercise of the lungs in the first stages of consumption, and in some cases election to a professorship has been the means of effecting a cure. But I lie in the hands of God, and as I daily seek His direction, I may trust He will make needful provision for me. Should He call me away soon I should not like to leave this place. You know there is much to attach me to Howden, and will not wonder at my wish to die here. I intend however to consult one of the London physicians, and should be happy if you could accompany me. We would go by steam and remain only a week. In the present state of my health and spirits I feel reluctant to go alone, and I need not say how delightful your company would be. Do make an effort.

May 5th. "I have been waiting to fix the time of my going to London, and have at last determined upon next Tuesday fortnight. I should like to see you here on Monday. I really do expect you. You must come. We shall stay as long or as short as you like.

"I feel surprised at the improvement in my strength and spirits since last Saturday. But I set small value on these changes, for one day I am on the summit of good health and the next feel ready for the grave. I have no doubt that tubercles are upon my lungs. I am often sanguine of recovery, and that I regard as no good symptom. I can now account for the mental excitement under which I have laboured. It has its origin in disease. I have a thousand things to tell you, but my tardy pen cannot give them utterance. I must reserve them till I see you."

The deeply painful emotions excited by this letter were augmented by the fact that circumstances debarred me from accompanying him to London.

On May 1st he writes in his Journal: "Sabbath. Last night, in prayer, was very much affected with these words: that Christ may 'be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.' I felt complete resignation to God. If Christ be magnified in my death, I am not only willing but wishful to die. If the great end be attained it seems not only wrong but foolish to be concerned about my own trifling desires. I thought of my unexecuted plans, and felt I could freely give them up. This morning my soul is calmly stayed upon God. I have not much joy but a sweet peace. I fear that much is yet to be done before I am ready for heaven. I feel unfit to join its company; but I have a humble confidence that God will prepare me. In examining my heart I think I can see the seeds of glory planted there. Low as my spiritual state is, I possess a something which belongs not to my depraved nature. And yet I sometimes doubt. In my gloomy moments I fear that imagination may have painted these splendid visions, and that I am living under an illusion. I then try to forget the past and come to God as if I had never come before. The sacrifice of the Redeemer is the only plea I urge; and knowing its prevalency with God I venture my eternal interests upon it.

Sometimes I am enabled to come very near to God, and to speak familiarly. At other times I have such views of His majesty as keep me at a distance, and I gaze in silent reverence. I then call to mind 'God manifest in the flesh,' and feelings of unutterable tenderness rush over my soul. There is something so affecting in the idea of His laying aside His majesty and coming to hold intercourse with me, in a nature like my own, that I feel as if I could look for ever in silent wonder upon this mysterious phenomenon. The mind in attempting to measure the two extremes of humiliation and majesty is lost in sweet confusion. 'To know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent,' this is knowledge indeed!"

4th. "I hope I feel a growing tendency towards whatever is excellent, and have more of a spirit of love than formerly. I have sometimes such strong affection for my fellow-men that I cannot avoid praying for them. These states of mind seem to indicate the existence of a divine nature within me. What a mystery of love that God should empty us of our vileness, and fill us with His own excellence!"

"This day has not been well spent. It might have yielded twice as much profit and pleasure. If I do not take care the great object of existence will be wrested from me, after all. It is surprising what may be done if only the spirit is determined. *The value of any given time is not to be estimated by its length, but by the quantity and quality of the action with which it is occupied.* Above all things I see the importance of beginning well in the morning. If the first three hours be well spent, a double value is stamped on the remaining hours. I find that the fate of the day is generally decided by breakfast time. Spend three hours before breakfast in deep and profitable study, and you may spend the rest of the day as you like."—Sir Walter Scott and

Albert Barnes, the American Commentator, furnish recent illustrations of the truth of this remark. "It was Sir Walter's practice to rise by five o'clock and light his own fire. By the time the family had assembled for breakfast, between nine and ten, he had done enough—to use his own words—to break the neck of the day's work." Mr. Barnes has told the public that the whole of his numerous Commentaries have been written before nine o'clock a.m.

5th. "I feel an earnest, and I trust, increasing desire to advance in religion, and certainly I have much more enjoyment in it than formerly. I attribute this to regularity in devotion—retiring for prayer at noon, and praying over the portion of God's word I read. I am convinced that *if we intelligently employ the means, God will never withhold His blessing.*"

"Have felt to-day a calm indifference to the opinions of men. It seems a small thing that they should censure or praise me.

'Happy, O God, if thou approve,
Tho' all beside condemn.'"

Experience probably supplied this sentiment: "I see it is highly possible for nervous weakness to assume the garb of humility. I will keep this in view."

6th. "Have had an unusual spirit of prayer both last night and this morning. God has appeared wonderfully great, and good, and glorious; so much so, that I could not help exclaiming: Wonderful Being! Blessed Jehovah! To be like Him appears so desirable that I wonder I do not every moment pray for it."

"There are many topics in religion not suitable to the pulpit, for this obvious reason, that they exclude more important things. Satan has gained a great point if he can get ministers to occupy their minds about religion to

the neglect of its vital parts. My desire is that every one who hears me may know what is the will of God concerning him, and that if any perish from under my ministry it shall not be my fault."—It cannot be surprising if some of the sentiments of a youth of twenty-one should be immature. I think the first sentence of this paragraph claims to be so regarded. I am not sure that the converse of this statement would meet the requirements of truth. Should not topics not strictly religious be occasionally introduced? According to both Apostolic precept and practice the preacher should be an instructor. And the range of his instruction should embrace every topic relating to man's duty—personal, domestic, social, and civil, as well as religious. To "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" was the large and lofty aim of the great Apostle. Of course the vital truths should be prominent. But the preacher who should confine himself to these, would not only be out of analogy with the Divine procedure in the physical and moral world, but would keep back the "strong meat" requisite for the formation of full-grown men. Those who regard the declaration of Paul to the Corinthians: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," as opposed to the course now advocated, overlook two important facts. 1. It was not to persons familiar from their youth with Scripture-truth, as are the people of this country, that this declaration was addressed, but to idolaters. For the same reason that we must have roots before we can have fruit, the first heralds of Christianity among a people must dwell exclusively on elementary principles. 2. The vast import of "preaching Christ" is overlooked. Is there one moral truth not comprehended in it? Does it not embrace every truth involved in man's relationship to God and to his fellows—to time and to eternity? By no means let us omit first principles—vital truths—but by no means let us keep to them, but "leaving" them "go on

unto perfection." I am happy to find Mr. Hessel writing on another occasion: "The pulpit should communicate instruction on the minor duties of life. Most people are unable to apply general principles. They require the application to be made for them."

7th. "Intimate communion with God gives a man a great advantage in his intercourse with men. An eminently good man is a moral touch-stone. He reveals the moral qualities of those with whom he comes in contact. The light shining in him discloses their darkness. The depravity of the Pharisees was never so manifest as in their intercourse with the blessed Saviour."

"My views of men and things are very much altered of late. To me this is not the same world it was a short time ago. The scenes around me appear to be rapidly changing, and perhaps this mysterious frame will soon be dissolved. Of what use have I been? Will the interests of the divine government have been advanced, and the plans of redeeming mercy forwarded, by my residence on earth? I hope they will in some small measure; and yet I am not without fear. When I compare what I have done with what I might have done, I feel ashamed. It seems wonderful that God should bear with me. There is on His part something like an obstinacy of love."

8th. "Have had some delightful thoughts of God. He has conjoined my excellence and happiness with His glory. What a wonderful connection! What a sublime mystery there is in the operations of His love! By seeking His interest I cannot but promote my own."

9th. "In heaven, imagination will meet with objects commensurate with its creations. It will not come in these evening tides, but will roll in one eternal stream."

To allay the anxiety it was natural his parents should

experience, he writes to them on May 13th: "I received the messages you sent. I fear you are too anxious about me. At present I am more comfortable here than I could be with you. You have no society at Catterton, and that is absolutely needful for me. I generally spend my evenings out; and in a small circle of friends, the greater part of whom I believe to be Christians, and the rest inclined, I experience perhaps as much enjoyment as this world can afford. Your habits and manner of life will prevent you from estimating the importance of this, and its relation to my health and happiness.

"I hope you will not make yourselves unhappy about me. Why should you? for I am very happy. I have, it is true, dark moments, but they bear no proportion to the rich enjoyments God has poured into my cup. As to my future lot, it is at His disposal who knows what is best for me, and who, I am persuaded, regards me with designs of mercy. I deem it my duty to use every practicable means for my recovery, and I calmly leave the result with Him. My views of the Divine character have lately become much more clear and affecting. The plan of redemption appears daily more wonderful and glorious, and sometimes I have felt so elevated above this fleeting world, that I scarcely felt myself an inhabitant of it. Is not my condition much better than if I had aimed at acquiring this world's good, and succeeded even beyond the most sanguine expectations I once entertained, but been destitute of religion? *Then* you might have cause for sorrow, *now* you have none. Whatever God does will be best, best for both you and me, and surely you do not wish to alter that which is best!"

22. "Am not right this morning. My views of spiritual things are confused, and my mind is unhinged. My desires for spiritual blessings are feeble. This may be partly attributable to physical causes, but not solely. These things

however must not alter my resolve to wait upon God. Endeavour to keep the mind in the proper attitude, and it will not be long before a change takes place."

"I saw a great deal in London that pleased and interested me," he wrote to me after his return, June 2nd, "but of all places I think I should most dislike to live there. Time might alter my sentiments perhaps, but certainly I have loved the country much more since I left the busy scenes of the metropolis. My stay however was so short that I am scarcely entitled to form an opinion on the subject.

"I saw Dr. Ramidge and learnt that my apprehensions were correct. There is a tuberculous cavity in each lung, which, if some remedy be not applied, must terminate fatally, he says. He has put me on a course of inhalation which has already produced powerful effects. He has forbidden me to preach.

"The stream of life flows on gently. I have much enjoyment, and but little annoyance. Through the Divine blessing on the means employed I have got my mind well disciplined. *Intellectual and moral excellence* I now see *are not of mushroom growth—they are the slow production of years.* If I am destined for active life, God has shown me the necessity of preparation for it. I can wait. My acquiescence in His plans is complete. I know you will rejoice at this, and most sincerely do I thank you for your sympathy both in joy and sorrow."—Though he is silent respecting it, this "acquiescence" must have cost an arduous struggle. Conquest involves conflict as certainly in spiritual as in carnal welfare. And the reader will believe that this was not a small conquest. Ambition was not likely to leave him unvisited. His love of literature was strong, and he could not doubt his power of one day augmenting its stores, and hoped, perhaps, to enrol his name among its illustrious sons. Heart-strings would be

torn and bleed therefore, before he could be brought to say: "My acquiescence in His plans is complete." But I believe this was fact. And though life was prolonged beyond what he then expected, and his health considerably invigorated, he appears to have maintained this feeling. I was in almost daily intercourse with him during the last eighteen months of his life, and I believe he could habitually say:

"Heart be still!
In the darkness of thy woe,
Bow thou silently and low;
Comes to thee whate'er God will—
Be thou still!

"Be thou still!
Vainly all thy words are spoken,
Till the word of God hath broken
Life's dark mysteries—good or ill—
Be thou still!

"Rest thou still!
'Tis thy Father's work of grace,—
Wait thou yet before His face;
He thy sure deliverance will—
Keep thou still!

"Lord my God!
By Thy grace, O may I be
All submissive, silently,
To the chastenings of Thy rod;—
Lord my God!

"Shepherd King!
From Thy fulness grant to me
Still, yet fearless, faith in Thee,
Till from night the day shall spring!
Shepherd King!"

He proceeds: "I am reading Southey's Life of Cowper. It is a great treat, although I meet with much that I cannot approve. Southey is an elegant writer, and the pleasantest biographer I have lately met with; but he is utterly unqualified to delineate some parts of Cowper's character. I

cannot however join in the rant against him which has been raised by a certain party.

"I am going through Foster's Essays. John is a most original thinker. Sometimes, however, he ekes out his thoughts singularly. You know he has long been a favourite with me—that I would scarcely allow any one to find fault with him except myself. I am glad to say that my admiration increases. I would put his books into the hands of every reflecting young person. I think he has got much from Pascal.

"Bloomfield's (Greek) Testament still pleases me. The text is beautiful, and the notes are judicious. I am reading the Gospel of John, and perhaps I need not tell you of the enjoyment I realize in tracing the various lineaments of the Redeemer of mankind, as they are pourtrayed by 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' I have much to regret, but I do hope that my views of 'God manifest in the flesh,' have lately become more clear and intense. There is a beauty and glory in this mystery which captivates my soul. It is this object which has filled my mind, and preserved its varied powers in their proper balance, or I am persuaded that long ere this I should have been—I will not say what. I think I am laid under peculiar obligations to recommend the Saviour."

4th. "We are very liable to err in estimating men's motives. The springs of human conduct are often so complicated that it is almost impossible to analyze them. If we examine our own motives, we shall often find it difficult to say what was the precise inducement to any given course. Our most selfish actions are seldom altogether selfish, nor our most benevolent deeds altogether disinterested. When the balance is at the equipoise a grain will give preponderance. So it is in those delicate causes which determine human conduct."

8th. "The superiority of character which a long and successful contest with difficulties and trials produces, is a reward for such conduct. And it is a reward of the very highest order. It far transcends every other gift which God confers in this world."—The grand purpose contemplated by God toward man is to produce assimilation to Himself. There "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature." Religious ordinances benefit us only as they elevate our aims and purify our motives. How is it possible for anything really to benefit me further than as it exalts my character? It is only thus the benefit can be permanent. If I am seeking any lower good than exaltation of views, purposes, and experiences, I am seeking that which is transient and unsatisfying. In the future world therefore, as well as in this, it will be found that the highest gifts God can impart are those which most ennoble our natures.

20th. "To be content with vague ideas has a mischievous effect not only upon speaking and writing but also upon conduct. A wise and energetic course of action must proceed from an intellect firmly braced and vigorously exercised."

"Some parts of Divine truth have far too feeble a hold upon my mind, especially those which relate to the punishment of the wicked."

"If I seek to appear better than I am, I am a hypocrite. This is loving the praise of men more than that of God."

"There is a difference between 'taking up' and 'bearing' our cross; between patiently bearing what is painful when we cannot avoid it, and voluntarily choosing it because it is the will of God."

"In nothing perhaps is the transcendent power of genius

more *felt* than in the ability to render common thoughts interesting—to cause that which has been heard a thousand times to possess the charm of novelty. This is a power requisite for the pulpit."

24th. "Have lost much by not praying more of late. I am certain that by prayer the value of all my studies is much increased."—The experience of every devout student confirms this statement. Many testimonies might be given illustrative of the truth of Luther's well-known aphorism, *bene precasse bene studuisse.* Doddridge frequently remarked "that he never advanced well in human learning without prayer, and that he always made the most proficiency in his studies when he prayed with the greatest fervency." Dr. Payson says: "Since I began to beg God's blessing on my studies, I have done more in one week than in a whole year before." "The influence of habitual prayer upon his studies," says his biographer, "was so certain and so operative, that the strength of his devotion seems, for the most part, to have been the measure of his progress. By his very near approaches to the 'father of lights,' his mind received, as it were, the direct beams of the eternal fountain of illumination. In the light of these beams the truths of religion were distinctly perceived, and their relations readily traced. These irradiations from the throne of God not only contributed to the clearness of his perceptions, but imparted a kind of seraphic energy and quickness to his mental operations. From them he derived, not light only, but heat." It must not be supposed, however, that the prayer which accomplishes such results is the mere utterance of words. It is the intimate and loving communion of the soul with God. It is the insatiable thirst to be like God—full of light and full of love. It is therefore the offspring of a heart earnestly bent on knowing and doing the will of God in all things.

July 5th. "In repressing bad habits provide a powerful antagonist. By this means the pass of danger is guarded by an auxiliary troop."

"Must we not conclude, that the higher powers of the mind, when sanctified, have a greater value attached to their operations than the inferior? It does not always appear to be so; but so it probably is. The influence of the popular preacher is limited to time and place. The press has been the grand instrument in bringing the best efforts of the human mind to bear upon the interests of our race." —The attempt to determine the respective importance of the pulpit and the press, seems just about as wise as to pronounce on the superior value to the body of the hand or the foot. The writer and the speaker have distinct functions, both indispensable to a nation's welfare. Is not Mr. Hessel's estimate of the press exaggerated? Would it not be as near an approximation to truth as we can perhaps make, to say, that the culture of the nation's intellect is effected chiefly by the press; while its religious feeling is excited and sustained chiefly by the pulpit?

"It is interesting to mark the origin of excellence. It is often humble and unassuming. Those qualities in the human character whose full development has been a blessing to the species, have often failed to attract attention in their earlier manifestations. The germ was doubtless there, but it was not seen by common eyes. The seed of a beautiful flower and of a common weed may bear a close resemblance, but, visible or invisible, the difference is great. That seed contains all the elements of the beauty it is destined to display. A favourable soil and a genial season are of course necessary to its development."

A fact has evidently been the parent of this thought: "You affect to pour contempt upon those who give a serious attention to religion, as if that fact indicated a weakness of

understanding. By what process have you arrived at such a result? Answer the inquiry at the bar of your own reason, ere you be called to answer it before a higher tribunal."

The following aphorisms are chiefly didactic or devotional :—

"Let me not despise anything that is good because it is not better. Give to every thing and every person their due meed of praise."

"In the life of every ardent student there is a period fraught with peculiar danger. It is when abandoning early prejudices he launches into free inquiry. Nothing but a constant and devout study of Divine truth can keep the restless and inquiring spirit in a right course."

"It is of vast importance to be at ease—to have all the powers of the mind in a tranquil state of preparation for action. Nothing is so conducive to this as a constant dependence upon Divine aid."

"Endeavour to keep in view that the cultivation of the intellect is not the end of existence—that every other faculty is given for the service of our moral nature. Moral sensibility and power are the great objects at which I must aim."

"It is extremely desirable to form a habit of viewing every object in relation to Eternity. It is well to try every doubtful case before an imaginary tribunal. What shall I think of this a thousand years hence? If this inquiry were solemnly proposed it would give our character a powerful bias."

"Every sentence of nervous writing invigorates the mind, every attempt to cherish and express devotional feeling benefits the heart. O that I could enlist the

tremendous power of habit into the service of mental and moral excellence."

"Such is the power of habit that the manner in which I spend this Sabbath will determine in some measure the manner in which I shall spend every succeeding one. If I lose this day it will be impossible to estimate the loss."

"The beginnings of evil must be resisted. How far easier to crush a nest of vipers in the egg than to catch and kill them after they are hatched!"

"To render evil for evil is to augment evil; to render good for evil is to diminish it. When we return injuries we co-operate with the wicked in the augmentation of that which God hates."

"Evil passions themselves are misery. God has inseparably connected happiness with holiness. He has made love to Himself and to our fellow-men the only true happiness to be found on earth."

"The more good I receive from God the more shall I transmit to others. Benevolence to my fellow-men ought to induce me to seek my own spiritual welfare."

"Often inquire what there is peculiar in which I can benefit mankind. Is there any course out of the usual channel for which by my education and habits I am expressly fitted?"

"Some eminent saints have practised rising very early to wrestle with God. This was undoubtedly one secret of their strength. If we will deny ourselves to plead with Him we shall receive a peculiar blessing.'

"I clearly see that if I do not live in the spirit of prayer unbelief will soon explain away those precious promises upon which my faith has rested. Their true meaning is to be seen only in the light of faith."

"A delusion has secretly been preying upon my mind. I have been expecting happiness in the future. It is my privilege to have it now. If I do not secure it now I may never get it."

"If I desire a good thing for a good end, I may confidently expect that in due time God will either give me it, or something better."

"Whatever we make the subject of thought takes possession of us and imprints its character upon our minds. It is by thinking of Christ that we become transformed into His image. What then may be the consequence of entertaining one sinful thought!"

—"O man! so prodigal of words, in deeds
Oft wise and wary, lest thy brother worm
Should hang thereon his echo taunt of shame,
How dar'st thou trifle with all-fearful thought?
Beware of thoughts! They whisper to the heavens.
Though mute to thee, they prompt the diamond pen
Of the recording angel.
Make them friends!
Those dread seed-planters for Eternity,
Those sky-reporting heralds—make them friends."

CHAPTER IX.

AT CATTERTON. His ardent love of nature—Hatred of party-spirit—On letter-writing—Blackstone's Commentaries—On self-reliance—Little things indicators of mind and character—On sermonizing—Ruth the Moabitess—Niebuhr's History of Rome—Goethe—Aphorisms relative to preaching.

"I have sat down this morning to write to you because I can do nothing else," he says in a letter to me dated Howden, July 16th. "This is paying you no great compliment, but it is the truth. I purpose leaving here on Monday to spend a few weeks at home. I feel it hard to break off the attachment I have formed to this place. The fields and trees and lanes, and above all, the noble river, have all become intertwined with the thoughts and feelings of the last months. You know how I love nature. You know it is not in mercenary notes I chant her praises. You know that the innermost recesses of my soul are smitten by her charms. I have lately conversed with her in her best moods and lived upon her beauty, but must now hie away to parts where her smiles are unknown. Judge what I must feel. 'But the course of true love never did run smooth.'"

To those acquainted with the localities it will probably appear strange that Mr. Hessel should regard the scenery around Howden as more attractive than that in the neighbourhood of Catterton. Most other persons would unhesitatingly award the palm to the latter place. But for "the noble" Humber there would be no comparison. The neighbourhood of Howden is flat, that of Catterton beautifully undulated. A mental cause determined the preference. Associations, arising from pleasant friendships, invested Howden with its charm.

After some humorous remarks he proceeds: "I know, my dear Priestley, it will give you pleasure to learn that my mind is in a much happier state than it was. What the ultimate issue will be, the doctors cannot say. It is a question which does not trouble me. I am not necessary to the salvation of the world. The divine government has resources to carry on its plans without me. I would rather be anxious to turn to best advantage the time afforded, than be concerned to know the length of it.

"I think I am much altered since I left Airedale. If I have not gained much wisdom, I hope I have lost much folly. I now see it is not well to be too fastidious. Our wisdom is to take things as they are and make the best of them. Never was party or sectarian spirit more odious in my estimation than now. It seems criminal to be quibbling about trifles when there are so many grand objects to be advanced in which all Christians concur. I fear there is too much of this spirit among us Dissenters, as well as among our brethren of the Establishment. This was not the spirit of Howe, and I do not know where to meet with a finer model of human excellence. In my estimation he stands next to the Apostle John."

In two or three days he again addressed me:—"I have sat down to do what probably I never did before, viz.—to write an epistle I intend to deliver myself. I should at this very moment have been upon the York Packet on my way home, but unluckily or luckily, it had got past Howden Dyke when I arrived. I cannot pin my mind to any serious employment. It has been rather hard worked of late, and I thought it should have a holiday and ramble where it pleased. If I should happen to stumble upon any happy conception, well; if not, we will have a laugh at my dulness when we meet.

"Nothing is more delightful to me than letter writing when I know my correspondent, and am in the writing

mood. To let one's ideas form their own winding channels is a luxury not unlike some kinds of delicious dreaming. Here is no inventing argument or hunting words, but both words and ideas arrange themselves just as it happens. Other kinds of writing resemble travelling upon dry, dull, dusty roads, without a turn or bend or any kind of variety. Letter writing is just like threading your way among tangled bushes and overgrown thickets, where, knowing that you cannot get far wrong, you saunter along 'heedless how far, and where, their mazes stray.'

"My sentiments upon this subject have undergone some change. I like a letter to be a letter, and not a treatise or an essay. What is the use of troubling your friends with long rigmarole dry discussion, when you must know that they can find far better reading in books. Say to them what you would say by 'word o' mouth' if you were to meet them. I confess I have been as arrant a proser as any one, but I hope I now know better. The best model for letter writing I am acquainted with is Cowper. The way in which the unhappy bard has acquired celebrity in this department was by just putting down such things as came into his head. But it must not be supposed that every one can arrive at equal excellence by the same plan. Cowper's head was doubtless rather different from that of many persons.

"I have been reading Blackstone's Commentaries. I am much pleased with his clear and lucid arrangement of thought, and his neat, chaste, and vigorous style. I would recommend him much to all who have a propensity for grand writing; and I must confess that your humble servant has not been without an itching for that species of composition.

"I have had a walk up Wood-lane, which doubtless you remember. Yesterday I fully determined to play the man and meet all the changes and evils of life with stern indif-

ference. But in wandering over these favourite haunts my manliness forsook me, and the old melancholy shed its relaxing influence. The wind sighed mournfully through the trees, whose lengthening shadows spread a solemn twilight over the scene. How strong is the influence of local attachment! There is a mysterious friendship between me and these trees which cannot be dissolved without some pangs on my part. If what some ancient philosophers have said be true, perhaps my friends of the field, the wood, and the grove, will mourn my absence. Farewell, lovely spots! You furnish an emblem of the instability of human happiness. A few months more and your verdure will be shrivelled and your beauty turned into desolation."

Having reached home he soon visits his favourite resort—Bilbro' Hill. It is situated in a field of park-like dimensions and appearance, and its summit is adorned with a tasteful grove. A fine sweep of richly cultivated land lies eastward, and the scene constitutes a beautiful panorama. Invariably carrying pencil and paper, and habituating himself to jot down at the moment anything he deemed worthy of record, we can realize some of the emotions he here experienced. 30th. "Under the beech-trees, Bilbrough. Prospect towards York beautiful—flying showers, the clouds scattered in grand variety—rain patters upon the leaves—the wind now rustles above my head and then sighs along the plain below. How great, how good, how lovely, must be the Great Author of this scene!"

"There is no tree delights me more than the beech. It stands a model of all that is noble, graceful, and elegant. Its fine, shapely, well-rounded trunk—the beautiful symmetry and proportion with which it spreads its branches—the delicate texture of its twigs, and the rich colour of its leaves, form a combination of beauty upon which the eye can rest with entire complacency. The elegant drooping of

its branches is unrivalled throughout the domain of nature. It is a fine emblem of a manly, noble, and cultivated mind."

Aug. 1st. "Bilbro' Hill. The sun sends his shaded light over the wide landscape; the lovely green in the distance merges into the heavenly blue. All is still, except now and then the breath of heaven gently stirs the trees. It seems as if nature were listening with delight to her own music."

"It is in the reflecting powers that the superiority of great men consists. Others may make equal attainments—may read and remember as much, but their knowledge will not be as great. These powers are always carrying on a silent process."

"Dependence upon others tends to debilitate the mind, especially where that dependence is for knowledge, judgment—mind itself."—Self-reliance is an invaluable quality, and essential to completeness of character. If, however, a fear of appearing dependent restrains us from availing ourselves of the experience or judgment of others, we shall betray the folly of the traveller who would avoid roads and bridges for the sake of showing his independence. Material for the formation of a right decision should be gathered from all quarters. Having obtained this, and sought counsel from "the Father of Lights," we must usually rely on our own judgment if we would become men.

4th. "Christ was descended from the royal family of Judea. It is probable that, notwithstanding their poverty, there would be an elevation of sentiment and a tone of feeling in both Joseph and Mary far above that of the common people. Doubtless Infinite Wisdom selected the best means for forming the character of the Great Prophet—a happy, intelligent, pious, domestic circle. Assuredly Mary was an exalted character."

"A truly great mind reveals itself in the minutiæ of

human action. In those minor matters which make up a great part of life, the quality of a spirit will often exhibit itself by the degree of energy it puts forth. When a man evidently spends his all upon trifling objects, it is a sure indication that he has not much to spend. But when we find that harmony of action which gives to every object its proportionate amount of energy, neither wasting it on small things, nor falling short in things more important, we meet with a well-balanced and powerful mind. It is surprising how much of a man's character may be learnt from the more insignificant parts of his conduct. Perhaps more of human character is developed in this way than in any other."

I had arranged to spend a few days with my friend about this time, but an attack of illness prevented. On the 5th he wrote: "I was disappointed at not seeing you last Tuesday, and am truly sorry for the cause. If I were a heathen I should say some evil genius looked with envy upon our friendship, and took a malignant delight in disconcerting our plans. But we have learnt to view these things otherwise.

"Although this place is lonely, and the trees seem to put on a solemn aspect, as if they were angry at my disturbing the silence that reigns among them, I have hitherto contrived to lead a pretty comfortable life. Things have turned out better than I expected, and I am rather doubtful, after all, whether I should not make a tolerably good hermit. I am generally busy from morning to night, and though I have no one with whom to share my labours, I look with pleasure to the time when you will. Having been produced in so ungenial a soil, however, I fear the fruit will taste a good deal like crabs.

"My sentiments on the great business of *our* life are somewhat altered, though I can scarcely tell you in what

respect. The tone or colouring of my views has undergone a change without any radical alteration of opinion. The field appears much more extensive, and my eye has detected an almost infinite diversity in departments which previously presented one general aspect. The conclusion I have reached —or rather the sentiment impressed upon my mind with peculiar emphasis is, that *patient, untiring, industry alone can qualify for eminent and extended usefulness.*

"In composing I have adopted a new plan. I generally write my sermons with the pencil in my walks. Of course they are in a very unfinished state, and I intend to leave them so for some time. If we live to meet, you will see they are of a very different character from any of my previous productions. I leave unsaid many things usually said upon common texts, and endeavour to give to the discourse an individuality, a character of its own, which will prove generally interesting. Those verbal divisions so common have lost all attraction with me. The beau-ideal at which I aim is to treat every subject according to nature; to modify every representation to the peculiarities of the thing represented; to catch the spirit of every sacred truth and give it an appropriate incarnation; and carefully to exclude every thing adventitious. This will require a style as varied as the face of nature. The loud and the soft—the solemn and the melting—the rugged and the harmonious—must all be brought into requisition. Sometimes the ray of a soft and sacred light must be let fall upon the audience—at other times the lightning flash, with its quick and quivering glare, must be employed to startle and arouse them; and of course it must be accompanied with the dark and frowning majesty of the thunder cloud.

"But I fear I am getting into the clouds, and as it is now after ten at night, I don't wish to leave the earth. My brain is beginning to complain of its spiritual taskmaster, and I think I had better lay it upon the pillow.

Where is the master-mind when this poor slave of a body is at rest? That is a question I'll thank you to answer me.

"My health has been much better. I can say nothing as to the result. These diseases are very insidious. Next winter will try me. This living alone does not suit me—society is necessary to my very existence. My mind often craves the gentle stimulus which it affords. I preached last Sunday and intend to preach to-morrow. I still inhale, and am certain that my chest is considerably enlarged. So far this is favourable."

On the 8th he writes in his Journal: "By writing I intend to do without writing—to teach my thoughts to shape themselves, as it were by instinct, into an elegant and manly model. I have gained for some thoughts an appropriate enunciation; cannot this be done for all? *Labour and patience can effect wonders—things that at first sight seem impossible.*"

10th. "How different are the appearances which the same objects present to the mind at different times. I remember to have stood almost entranced with delight in gazing upon a lovely scene, where every object beamed with a divine beauty that captivated the soul, but in visiting it the next day it appeared quite uninteresting. Let no man decide upon any important object until he has seen it often, and under different circumstances."

11th. "To mark the varied effects which religion produces upon the mind is a truly philosophical way of seeking to understand its nature. To the Christian philosopher, the varied phenomena exhibited by the operation of divine truth upon every diversity of character, must be deeply interesting."

After having stated, amongst other things, that he believed his health to be improving, he writes to me August 12th: "I have found my principal recreation in walking to

a hill about a mile distant. You see how ambitious I am. It really gives me pleasure to look down upon the valley in which our habitation is enshrouded. As to the real source of this pleasure I can give you no information. I can only say that it 'suits the mounting spirit like myself.' But this hill has other attractions besides its elevation, for the top is covered with a tasteful plantation in which there are walks and seats. During the heat of the day I often find a shelter from the sun, and in true classic style recline—sub tegmine fagi (under the shade of a beech-tree).

"I have lately had a perverse delight in allowing myself an uncontrolled liberty of rambling when I write letters. It is such a relief from the trudging, straightforward travelling of regular composition, that the mind, like a spirited horse, abuses its liberty, and overleaps all bounds.

"I often think of poor Ruth (of the Old Testament). Had she been blessed with education she would have made a fine woman. There was a character about her, and under no circumstances would she have merged into the general mass. I am often pained when I think of the undeveloped talent there is in the world. How many, formed by nature for advancing the highest purposes of existence, are trudging in low occupations! What dreadful havoc has sin made in our world! What a vast amount of mind it has destroyed!

"I have begun Niebuhr's History of Rome. It is very elaborate, and displays a vast amount of learning. There is much ground in it which I cannot afford to travel, such as the obscure history of the tribes who occupied Italy before the foundation of Rome.

"I have finished Goethe. He has left a feeling of profound admiration and wonder upon my mind. I cannot however understand his religion. He had a religion, and professed attachment to Christianity, and occasionally one meets with bursts of something like devotion in his remains. He appears to have got many of his principles from Spinoza,

but as Spinoza has been very differently interpreted I can scarcely tell what they are. I believe that Goethe held intercourse with the evangelical party in Germany. I shall read his Faust as soon as I can lay my hands upon it. I have also determined, if spared, to learn the German language. So far as I can see it is a language after my own heart.

Sep. 14th. "It is well to pray for one's friends. It is one of the most striking features of that constitution of mercy under which we are placed, that all its blessings are granted in answer to prayer. The more we pray for our friends the more shall we love them. So that if our petitions on their behalf be not granted, the principles of benevolence will be strengthened in us."

15th. "I feel that I am very slow in applying the principles of divine truth to the circumstances of life. I read —understand—approve—but often forget. Lord make me a *doer* of thy word."

His health had now so far recruited as to warrant the hope that he could resume his College duties. After spending a fortnight with me, we proceeded to Undercliffe in the beginning of September. A letter written to his uncle Campbell a few days after, awakens the apprehension that his stay must be brief. "My health has been much better since I last saw you, although I have not been quite so well since I came to College. The cold bleak winds here don't suit me, and I fear I shall have to leave very soon. I am not now pursuing regular studies.

"I am sorry that during the last half-year I have been so dull an inmate of your house. I am convinced that a flow of good spirits is one of the best antagonists of disease. I am happy to say however that I am much better in this respect. Should my life be spared I shall

regard you my dear uncle, under God, as the instrumental cause. The ordinary language of gratitude will not express the obligation I feel for your unrepayable kindness. The emphatic words of Shakspeare involuntarily arise :—'Beggar as I am, I am poor even in thanks, but I do thank you.'

"I came to your house at a very critical period. My nervous system had acquired such a dreadful energy that it now appears a wonder it did not destroy my life. Through the kind care of yourself and aunt, with the pleasant society Howden supplied, I am now in a great measure restored to calmness and self-possession.

"There is one thing, my dear uncle, you will permit me to mention, as being of vast importance, I mean an attention to personal religion. I believe that but for the consolations of the Bible, I should not have been alive. Nothing would give me greater delight than to know that you and my dear aunt were living in the enjoyment of true religion. I hope—nay I believe—you both see these things differently from what you did. For your kindness towards me I can make no temporal return, but it may not be improper to tell you that I do not fail to remember you in prayer. May God bless you, and cheer your declining years with those consolations He alone can impart, and whenever He may take us from this world, may we all meet in a higher and happier state!"

Not more than a fortnight elapsed before the fear expressed in this letter was realized. His unfavourable symptoms rapidly increased, and it was deemed necessary for him to leave the College. He reached home on the last day of September. In a letter I received from him a few days after, he says: "My health upon the whole is better, and if I had a little society would soon be much better. The balmy breeze here is delightful to my exasperated lungs and nerves, beyond what I can express. In going down the hill when I left the College my lungs began

bleeding, and continued for near an hour. Since then I have had no return. I think it was caused by the cold dry air, for I bled a little when I first came. It is absolutely necessary that I keep away from it.

"At present I am reading Horace; John, in Greek; and the Psalms, in Hebrew; and so far as I now see I shall keep to these. My sermons go on slowly. I cannot write here; I have too few books, and want to be a little nearer Mr. Haigh's library. I generally do best with a great many irons in the fire, always having something important in the great tongs. But here my bellows are bad, and the fire won't burn, and beating cold iron is miserable. If you did not know better you would think I had been a blacksmith."—Mr. Haigh was the proprietor of a boarding-school for young gentlemen, then at Grimston-lodge, near Tadcaster. He has since established Bramham College. His kindness prompted him to give Mr. Hessel free access to his large and valuable library.

"I think I shall be following the leadings of Providence in settling for some time near Mr. Haigh. I do not know any place where the air is so mild and salubrious, and the scenery so agreeable. In these respects it is all I can wish. I think also there is room for usefulness. I do not lose sight of the fifty boys to whom probably I shall often preach. Between young minds moral sympathies are usually strong, and with the blessing of God, I may exert an influence upon these lads which an older preacher could not. Most of them will probably be called to occupy important stations in life, and we cannot calculate the consequences of religious impressions which may now be made. I feel more than ever that my only happiness in this world will consist in doing good, and I wish to turn every opportunity to the best account."—It is not Mr. Hessel's character merely that is here exhibited, it is the character of the religion of Christ. It was it which inspried this benevolent yearn-

ing for the welfare of these youths. And this was not the fortuitous result of a happy combination of Christian truth with a peculiar temperament. It was the natural, infallible, result of a right understanding and real experience of that truth. Whoever receives it into his heart receives the benevolent spirit of its Author. "The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost." By the law of his spiritual life he is constrained to do good. And what a fine sphere for benevolence does our world present! The very wants and woes which sin has created furnish opportunity for the efflux of benevolence. And it is difficult to say whether the object or the subject is the most benefited.

"Would'st thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?
Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?
Balm would'st thou gather for corroding grief?
Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold.
'Tis when the rose is wrapped in many a fold
Close to its heart, the worm is wasting there
Its life and beauty; not when, all unrolled,
Leaf after leaf, its bosom, rich and fair,
Breathes freely its perfume throughout the ambient air."

Oct. 4th. "By an eager and morbid craving after mere intellectual attainments I destroy a great part of the rich enjoyment intended for me. *We cannot go contrary to God's intentions in the least without injuring ourselves.* We may not always be conscious of the injury, but there are laws in constant operation which will infallibly work out the just, but to us, unhappy result."

"Much may be done in preaching by graphic delineation. The various passages of our Saviour's life are pregnant with scenes of beauty. The errors and mistakes—the diversified moral scenes—which society everywhere presents, afford ample material for this power."—The power of employing vivid and familiar illustration has been one of the

chief characteristics of all permanently popular and pre-eminently effective preachers. Whitfield possessed this power. A writer in the Homilist says of the late Williams of Wern, that "he was distinguished for the quickness with which he detected the analogies existing between human and spiritual operations. If there was one thing more than another in which he excelled as a preacher, it was in the novelty and pertinence of his illustrations. Never, perhaps, since the days of the Great Teacher, did any preacher lay the objects of nature and the pursuits of men under greater contribution for the exposition and enforcement of religious truth. 'How,' he once inquired in a sermon preached at Bala, where the humbler classes are engaged in knitting stockings—'How is character formed? Gradually—just as you Bala women knit stockings—*a stitch at a time.*'" "The true measure of a preacher's greatness is his power of illustration," says the writer of an interesting article on "Henry Ward Beecher," in a recent No. of the "Christian Spectator." "He has to explain and enforce truths that lie beyond the region of the senses before an audience almost entirely engrossed with the material world. And it is folly to preach abstract truth before a popular audience." "The mass of hearers are people made up of imagination, conscience, and feeling, far more than of intellect. And if preachers are to lay hold of them and lift them into a better sphere of life, they must do it principally by means of the imagination and the feelings, and not by logic and intellect. They must take the Gospel for granted; they must take the atonement and prayer for granted; and not be everlastingly proving what ninety-nine out of every hundred have admitted all their lives. What the people want is, that you should move their hearts, prick their consciences, and convert abstract truth into pictures. The preacher that will do this will be best able to teach them to think, and lead them to Jesus Christ. It is for this

power we so highly value Mr. Beecher. He apprehends the true functions of the pulpit clearly. He can think, and he teaches his hearers to think; but he beguiles them into it by the manner in which he turns every thought into a portrait. Sometimes the painting is homely, sometimes beautiful, and sometimes magnificent."

Here is a string of passages relative to preaching.

"In the composition of sermons let the object be well defined, go to it in the most direct way, and all will be easy and natural. Suppose the subject should be 'Death,' let the composition be prompted by this reflection: I wish to impress this congregation with a sense of their mortality, and to make them feel the momentous importance of preparation for death, judgment, and eternity."

"Some students have an unnatural craving for the splendid in composition, and disdainfully turn away from every thing else as common-place. This is very mischievous, especially as it regards the composition of sermons. One great business of the preacher is to stir up the minds of his hearers by way of remembrance—to present familiar ideas under new forms, or in new relations. The most useful thoughts are those with which the people are most familiar. A devoted heart will always clothe them with freshness and force. Besides, persons of good taste will always relish plain truth best."

"The preacher must have a clear view of the way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. There must be no cloudiness in his representations on this subject. He must shine with a clear and steady light, so that his hearers may wonder they had not previously seen how simple is God's method of saving sinners. Obscurity on this point will hinder the exercise of faith."

"In proportion as I experience redeeming-love shall I set

it forth with clearness and power. It is a great evil when ministers speak coldly or equivocally. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? Nothing can make a good preacher without a strong conviction—a vivid and permanent impression of the truth of the gospel."

"There is nothing more powerful in advancing religion than moral sympathy. Argument may be useful, but unaccompanied with the fervour which love creates, its benefits will be small. When the sinner sees that we have deep and agonizing concern for him, he will begin to feel concern for himself. We must *feel* for the souls of others if we would be the means of their salvation."

"If we are not determined by the grace of God to *do* the truth, we shall not be able to *speak* it. I fear this is the reason why many are the advocates of error."

"I more than ever feel the importance of single-eyed honesty in all I think, or say, or do. May God help me to exemplify this quality both in public and private. I hope to avoid all got-up excitement in the pulpit. I wish to speak simply what I think and feel. The energy which springs from any other source than the calm and steady view of truth is spurious."

"To be perfectly at home in the pulpit one must live at its intellectual and moral elevation. If I take care of the week, God will take care of the Sabbath. If I put myself under a good discipline—physical, intellectual, and moral—I cannot but be in a state adapted for usefulness on the Lord's-day. It is by neglecting study and prayer that we fail in preaching. Prayer and labour combined are all but omnipotent."

"Let me bear in mind that the 'wisdom of words' will make the cross of Christ of none effect. The moment I

depart from an artless declaration of the 'truth as it is in Jesus,' I lose my power. Men may admire my preaching, but they will not be converted and sanctified by it."

"In preaching, the intellectual process should be gone through some time before entering the pulpit. The truths to be uttered should be prayerfully pondered, that their importance may be adequately realized."

"The power of thought depends much upon the clear and natural order in which it is presented. Let me never therefore enter the pulpit without having the discourse fully thought out. It is not the province of the Spirit to arrange thought."

"My sermons have presented too many objects to the mental eye, so that none of them produce the desired impression. Unity is one of the essentials of good preaching. The best sermons have but one idea, one tone, one end. Concentration of attention and energy is the great condition of success in almost every thing."

"The results of eloquence are the best test of its value."

"A sermon should exactly meet the wants of the hearer."

"Persuasion, friend, comes not by toil or art;
Hard study never made the matter clearer:
'Tis the live fountain in the speaker's heart,
Sends forth the streams that melt the ravished hearer.
Then work away for life; heap book on book,
Line upon line, and precept on example:
The stupid multitude may gaze and look,
And fools may think your stock of wisdom ample:
But all remain unmoved: to touch the heart—
To make men feel, requires a different art.
For touching hearts, the only secret known,
My worthy friend, is this:—to have one of your own."

CHAPTER X.

AT NORTHALLERTON. A time of trial — Todd's Student's Guide—Rev. Richard Watson—Contemplates Missionary life in India—The feeling with which the weaknesses of our fellow-men should be regarded—The spirit we should evince toward those hostile to us—Harris's Great Teacher—Mill's History of British India—John Howe—One chief cause of wonder to the glorified spirit—An argument with a sceptic—Reflections on select portions of Holy Writ.

ONE of the severest trials permitted to assail humanity is experienced by those who are denied scope for their benevolent impulses. A heavy burden presses upon the heart of that man, who, feeling the grandeur of his mission, and realizing the brevity of the period allotted for it, is doomed to inaction. The pent-up energy expends itself in exploring the reason for these unwelcome circumstances, devising means of emancipation, or, it may be, gloomily brooding over them. Mr. Hessel was now in this position. He had capability for some degree of exertion, but no adequate scope. He longed for some sphere where no large demand being made upon his strength, the mind would have congenial and full employment. The Bible reveals to us the wisdom of our being sometimes placed in such painful circumstances. Resignation, patience, and faith in God, are necessary to completeness of character, and to some kinds of usefulness. But how could these virtues be exercised, and therefore matured, were not such circumstances permitted? Mr. Hessel cherished these views, and reaped the benefit they are fitted to yield. Ere long, however, a peculiarly suitable sphere was presented.

It has been seen that early in his Collegiate course he

had been sent to preach at Northallerton. The favourable impression he made was not forgotten. The church was still without a pastor, and the office-bearers on learning his position gladly sought his temporary services. He apprised me of his acceptance of the invitation in a letter dated Oct. 20th :—"I hope it will not be deemed unpardonable to trouble you with a letter before the last is answered, providing I can shew a good reason for the deed. I believe I can. I am going to Northallerton for four Sabbaths. If the air be suitable I think my visit will be beneficial to me.

"I have been reading 'Todd's Student's Guide,' and strongly recommend it to you. It contains much wisdom, and is written with a terribly condensed energy. It has a few minor faults, which may produce effects the author never contemplated, and which he would no doubt lament. There is a keenness in the style which may operate unfavourably upon sensitive minds, and prompt to a course of unhealthy action. I am no stranger to the evil, and therefore can speak of it.

"I heard Dr. R— at York last night. I did not much like him. I am no admirer of the species of eloquence he adopts. I think I daily grow in love with simplicity. All show-off in pulpit addresses is painful to me.

"I have finished Richard Watson's life. He was a great and good man. Such men do not come into our world every day. Robert Hall was almost unbounded in his praise of him, and recommended his congregation to hear him. And yet his life was one of turbulence and activity. It is a strange anomaly that those who have least time to study often effect most. Who would have thought that Erasmus wrote his works while rambling over Europe in search of patronage?"

On the same day he wrote in his Journal: "I cannot do what I wish to do; I cannot do what some men have done;

but I will do what I can. I will make the best of my circumstances. Here my mind shall rest.

"I will take no one for my model. I will endeavour to direct my energies into useful and suitable channels. This alone is the way to true greatness."—Such was the spirit in which he went to Northallerton. His visit to this place formed an important link in the chain of events which make up his brief history, for here was laid the foundation of a change in his opinions on some important points in Christian theology.

26th. "I am now conscious of a power I never had before. I despair of nothing if only I have God's help. I have obtained a clearer insight into the operation of His laws, and have more confidence in their results. I believe that if I earnestly set about the work, I could fill this chapel. Will it not be a great sin if I do not?"—And I believe he did. At all events I know that the congregation increased considerably. He was now reaping the benefit of having intelligently and diligently sought the realization of his aspirations. This record furnishes an illustration of that principle of the Divine procedure: "to him that hath"—as result—"shall be given."

30th. "I am about to place myself in a very intimate and solemn relation to many immortal souls. Who can tell the effects of this evening's service? There will be results. Every sentiment I utter may be valuable to some one in the congregation. Its efficacy will depend upon the mode of utterance. O that I fully understood my own sermon! The great thing I now want is faith—a realization of the invisible. If but these grand objects could be so presented as to give the vividness of witnessing the reality!"

Nov. 4th. "I will devote Saturday afternoon to a review of the labours of the week. This will be both pleasant and

profitable. I have lost much by not reviewing."—By "the labours of the week" Mr. Hessel does not mean the public services, but the studies, in which he had engaged. And though two opinions may exist as to the pleasantness of such a review, there can be but one as to its profitableness. It is not what we hear or read that becomes knowledge—intellectual capital with which we can traffic—but what we retain. Fully one half of the knowledge most persons acquire is speedily forgotten. Young man secure your acquisitions, and you can do that only by reviewing them. Every review tends to render indelible the impressions made on the mental tablet. "Remember," says Todd, "that the great secret of being successful and accurate as a student, next to perseverance, is the constant habit of reviewing."

"There may be a combination of moral elements in which there is but little to weaken their full efficiency. There are moral powers which are unequivocal in their operations. The man who has them speaks and writes in a tone which all must feel, and with an authority which none can gainsay. Wherever he puts forth his mind the minds of his fellow-men bow before it. Why? Because it has most of Deity in it. This is the highest kind of usefulness. Such was the great Prophet."

7th. "In the earlier ages, when men were unable to trace the connection subsisting between the natural and moral government of the world, and to see how sin, by natural and irresistible laws, works its own punishment, it was necessary that God should affix special penalties to many sins. Now, that necessity does not exist."

Let all readers of "a certain keenness of mind" ponder this: "There is a certain keenness of mind which may be turned to vast account if joined with benevolence. It acts like a sharp medicine upon our diseased nature. It is a

necessary moral element in our world. It must however be under the guidance of love, which, so far from weakening, will strengthen it."

In a letter to me dated the 15th, he says: "My health has very much improved since I came here. The air agrees remarkably well with me. I am staying a Sabbath longer than I expected, and perhaps I may come again for a few weeks. You will be gratified to hear that I have not been more happy of late than I am now.

"I have some important news to tell you. My mind has of late been turned very much towards India. I have serious thoughts of going. I have great hopes that it would suit my health, and I fear that my life in England would be only a melancholy struggle with our cold climate. It is my daily prayer that God would send me to that part of His earth where I shall do most good. My mind has of late been singularly abstracted from the influence of those minor considerations which once very much affected me. I have endeavoured to form a calm and accurate estimate of my adaptation for such a work, and I believe that in many respects I am peculiarly fitted for it. If such persons as myself are not to go, who are? And the work must be done. Whilst my attainments in many things upon which my usefulness in England would much depend are but very meagre, my circumstances have led me to acquire a versatility of mind admirably qualifying me for new emergencies. Besides I feel that my mind has commenced a struggle with the spirit that reigns at home, and perhaps if I stayed here I might spend a life in fruitless contention with it. A society composed of more simple and primitive elements would be better adapted for me. A species of refinement has crept into English society, which I feel disposed to handle too rudely. I have long felt this, and been often tempted to despise what I could not, or

would not, imitate. These tendencies ought to be taken into consideration, for they will probably increase if I live.

"Through the goodness of God I am but little harassed by wanderings into the future. If I do what is right now, I know all will be well. The people here are very kind and sympathizing. I am often affected even to tears when I think of these instances of the divine goodness."

On the same day he wrote in his Journal :—"With God's help I will from this time aim at universal excellence. I will endeavour to be as little influenced as possible by the false opinions prevailing in society. Find out what is right and proper, useful and beautiful, and do it. In writing to my friends I will take more pains with my letters. I will regard letter writing as an important means of usefulness. An elegant easy style is extremely desirable. I wish from this time to live more in communion with God, not only because I shall be more happy, and better prepared for death, but because I am convinced that all I speak, and write, and do, will be much more valuable, and produce a far greater amount of good."

25th. "It is not desirable to dwell upon the faults and weaknesses of others, except with pity. This will prevent much uneasiness, and conduce to true greatness and goodness. Often think how the Saviour would have thought and felt and acted had He come in contact with certain persons."—A larger amount of human infirmity was exhibited to Mr. Hessel than a person of his years usually witnesses. His heart was bent on usefulness, his mind was fertile in expedients, and his position made him feel responsible for attempts at improvement. At the period these remarks were written, the spirit of progress had not possession of the public mind to nearly the extent it now has. He had frequently to encounter strong prejudice therefore. I do not affirm that his projects were always wise, but

ample evidence is furnished in these pages that he was possessed of judgment and sagacity far beyond his years. And what a gleam of true nobility shines from this record! How natural for contempt to be excited by unreasoning opposition to a project felt to be important! That it is wrong most will admit; and that it is pernicious all both see and feel. No lines subscribed by the honoured name of Wordsworth deserve more frequent perusal than those in which he sets forth the inalienable claim of every fellow-creature to be shielded from contempt.

> "'Tis nature's law
> That none, the meanest of created things,
> Of forms created the most vile and brute,
> The dullest, or most noxious, should exist
> Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,—
> A life and soul to every mode of being
> Inseparably linked. Then be assured
> That least of all can aught that ever own'd
> The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
> Which man is born to, sink, howe'er depressed,
> So low as to be scorn'd without a sin;
> Without offence to God, cast out of view,
> Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
> Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
> Worn out and useless."

Sometimes, of course, he met with treatment which ill accorded with what he expected or felt himself to merit. To such an occurrence we are indebted for this entry: "In future I will place my happiness at no one's disposal."—Would that as limited an amount of experience always led to a similar result! How many who have lived twice as long extract as much "wormwood and gall" from a rebukeful word, as poisons the fountain of their enjoyment for days! He proceeds: "It shall be my business to bestow rather than to receive benefits. Cannot I give these people that which is more valuable than anything they can

give me? I can furnish them with sentiments that will be useful through life, and they can but return their approbation. Let it satisfy me that I have done them good."—Young man be persuaded to read this paragraph again, and then breathe fervently to Heaven this prayer: So Lord enable me to think, and feel, and act! To return angry words, nay to allow a feeling of unkindness toward those who may have injured us, is not only wrong to them, but to ourselves. It is to harbour a viper in our breast. If I open my heart to any feeling opposed to love, I become my own enemy. That my neighbour is foolish enough to allow the sanctuary of his moral nature to become the receptacle of malevolent feeling toward me, is no reason why I should imitate his example. Rather otherwise, for it furnishes me with an opportunity of exemplifying the beauty and power of Christianity. The true follower of Christ says: "My business is to love men irrespective of their feeling to me, and to do them good whatever be their conduct to me." To be a diffuser of joy—a dispenser of blessings—this is the noblest vocation which God can assign any of His creatures; it is the noblest work in which He Himself is engaged. Do not, my young friend, place your happiness at any one's disposal. However others may feel or act toward you, let it not prevent you from seeking their good.

28th. "I must guard against acting prematurely. When a thing is done in its proper place there is a pleasure something like the perception of truth. There is an obvious necessity which satisfies the mind as to the course pursued. The converse of such a course appears incongruous or impossible."

29th. "What is the care that now preys upon my heart? Does it not arise from a distrust of God—a fear lest He should not order all things for the best? It is just and

proper that I should be unhappy. It is a righteous punishment for my sin."

Dec. 3rd. "I have never yet put forth my powers, and perhaps do not half understand the possibilities of my nature. *What may not a spirit that leans upon God accomplish?* God is calling me still further from created objects to Himself. My father! I answer thy call; I come."

"Every day should produce something. These three weeks"—the time he expected to remain at Northallerton—"will not be lost. They will exert an influence upon the whole of my future life. I have it in my power to make that influence favourable."

On the 12th he writes to me: "I have lately been reflecting much upon the sublime possibilities of this state of being. How few there are who prove them! With many it seems to be a question how little can be attained rather than how much. It must have been a wonderful elevation of mind which prompted Paul to say: 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' I have lately had moments when almost everything appeared possible; when I almost felt the divine power identified with my own, or rather filling the place of my weakness, and yet I should hesitate to employ his language.

"I have been reading 'The Great Teacher.' It is a great book, greater I think than 'Mammon.' I pity the blindness that can see no genius in it. Much as the world professes to love truth she is yet comparatively an outcast. The humility of her garb, and the simplicity of her mien, have but few attractions for many even of her professed admirers.

"I have of late been very much impressed with the importance of recognizing the Divine agency in every thing. The Infinite Spirit appears to me to be much nearer our spirits than I once thought. The relation is one of the

utmost possible proximity—just short of identity. I speak of our physical being. When our moral being shall have attained a nearness analagous to this, the desire of Christ will be accomplished, 'that they may be one in us.'

"I am reading 'Mill's History of India.' It should be studied by every one wishing to gain a deep acquaintance with that country. His style is that of an English gentleman, and his thoughts are those of a philosopher. My mind is almost made up on the subject of India."

13th. "A day has much more in it than one is apt to think. A multiplicity of labour should rather be a matter of joy than regret. I am perfectly able to do all that devolves upon me this week, if only I do every thing 'at its proper time.'

15th. "Whenever I find myself going wrong let me get right again immediately. I have often despised the weakness of other people. Alas! I fear I have not known my own."

"The Scriptures look only at the essential nature of objects, and scarcely notice forms and appearances and modes. There is something like this in men of great minds—a system of classification more abstract than men ordinarily adopt. 'He is not a Jew who is one outwardly.' —'If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham.' This is a characteristic of Milton."

16th. "Diligence in the study will secure variety in the pulpit. Nothing else will. No reservoir of knowledge can yield a continuous supply. There must be a spring."

19th. "It is highly probable that the millenium will be something very different from what is expected. Perhaps many will not see it when it comes. Things will be too simple and too obvious. Even the physical improvement of the race will doubtless meet with opposition from prejudice."

20th. "May there not be a communication between separated minds through the medium of the Divine Being? He is the grand sensorium of the universe, and may He not graciously lend Himself to His creatures, for the purpose of conveying and exchanging their sympathies? May not the prayers of one creature on behalf of another be answered in this manner?"

"Much is lost through a quiescent surrender to a feeling of incapacity to master a subject which lies out of our usual range of thought. Something of this has been experienced this morning respecting some portions of the Bible. It is not well to yield to it; this debilitates the mind. Perhaps it will be best for me to study the Bible without the help of commentators. First think for myself, and then see what others have thought. By patient thought an intricate subject may often be unravelled. Nothing is to be done without close thinking. A habit of loose and careless thinking will be productive of sad consequences."—These last two sentences claim the consideration of every youthful reader. What will talent or even genius avail without the acquisition of knowledge? And how can extensive knowledge be acquired without application? With rare exceptions the only men of talent and genius that have enriched our literature, or shed a splendour on our country, have been men of industry. "Richard Burke, being found in a reverie shortly after an extraordinary display of powers in Parliament by his brother Edmund, was questioned by a friend as to the cause. He replied: 'I have been wondering how Ned has contrived to monopolize all the talents of the family; but then again I remember when we were at play, he was always at work.' The force of this anecdote is increased by the fact that Richard Burke was considered not inferior in natural talent to his brother. Yet the one rose to greatness, while the

other died comparatively obscure. Don't trust to your genius, young man, but work, work, work."

"No good of worth sublime will Heaven permit
To light on man as from the passing air;
The lamp of genius, though by nature lit,
If not protected, pruned, and fed with care,
Soon dies, or runs to waste with fitful glare:
And learning is a plant that spreads and towers
Slow as Columbia's aloe, proudly rare,
That, mid gay thousands, with the suns and showers
Of half a century, grows alone before it flowers.

Has immortality of name been given
To them that idly worship hills and groves,
And burn sweet incense to the queen of heaven?
Did Newton learn from fancy, as it roves,
To measure worlds, and follow where each moves?
Did Howard gain renown that shall not cease,
By wanderings wild that nature's pilgrim loves?
Or did Paul gain heaven's glory and its peace,
By musing o'er the bright and tranquil isles of Greece?"

It was about this time that his attention was first directed to the writings of the two Wesleys. The influence they began to shed over him is very apparent in many of the subsequent extracts:—Jan. 26th. "I have for some time had a conviction that true religion cannot be the half-and-half sort of thing it too often seems amongst us. The operations of divine power cannot be so equivocal. O that God would lead me to something better!"—Whether he may be praised or blamed for altering his views on "the five points," no reader will blame him for desiring to be led "to something better." He had never yet experienced either the religious joy or power he now began to see were the privilege of every Christian believer. It will be seen that his religious experience became clearer and deeper.

My term at College having expired at Christmas, Mr. Hessel spent a few days with me prior to my entering upon

the duties of the pastorate at Kirkby-Stephen, in Westmoreland, and to his entering upon an engagement for three months at Northallerton. In a short time after our separation I received from him the accompanying letter dated Feb. 1st: "Perhaps it is not necessary to tell you that since we parted I have often thought of you. The remembrance of the pleasant hours we have lately spent together will not be easily effaced. I hope you feel happy in your nook, and find the work of your hands to prosper. Since I saw you I have had a severe attack of influenza. It has reduced me very low, but I am regaining my strength and spirits.

"During the last week my mind has been influenced in a peculiar manner. I trust I can say that I have been humbled in the dust on account of my spiritual poverty. I have wasted much time in unprofitable pursuits, and have failed to realize habitually the great end of existence. I have discovered many things in myself which call for deep humiliation before God, but which I feel reluctant to mention even to my friend. At the same time I hope that God is commencing a blessed change in me, and leading me nearer to Himself. I am certain that if I live as I have done I shall never be of much benefit to the world. It is a great mercy the decree has not gone forth—'cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground?'

"I have applied myself more than ever seriously to the study of the Scriptures. If we wish to be enriched with divine wisdom we must search them diligently and prayerfully. There is something exquisitely delightful, humbling as it is, in feeling our ignorance and asking wisdom from God. I have lately spent much time in examining parallel passages, and have found the practice wonderfully profitable. I see it is quite possible for an unlearned reader of the English Bible only, to become much wiser than many ministers.

"I am reading Howe. Whatever you do keep close to him. I know no writer in whom there is such a rare combination of excellencies. His quick perception of divine things — his delicate moral sensibility — the fine, pure, heavenly feeling that warms his thoughts—the power and symmetry of his intellect—the admirable manner in which he loses himself and becomes filled with his theme—these give me daily delight. You must read him attentively however, and perhaps it is best to read little at once. I have to-day been reading a sermon of Richard Watson's. I was struck with the similarity between him and Howe. They were both evidently born to study. How many study, or pretend to study, who were not!

2nd. "I have no doubt you will feel yourself to have commenced a new life. Preaching statedly to the same congregation is very different from College preaching. I have lately seen the importance of a careful preparation for the pulpit. Our sermons, if we hope for success, must be deeply and devoutly studied. We must aim at a clear arrangement of thought, and have divine truth laid before the eye of the mind in a simple and natural order. It is mischievous to get into the habit of 'smocking up a sermon' in no time. I am persuaded the future character of our mind will much depend upon our present practice. I care not how plain the words a man uses if only his thoughts are clear, orderly, and strong.

"Suffer a word of exhortation. You will not be offended if I remind you of the importance of selecting suitable subjects for your hearers. It is my opinion, and I think you will agree with me, that our preaching in general is far from meeting the moral exigencies of our congregations. The cross of Christ, with its wonderful claims and attractions, should be more urgently pressed upon the attention of the people. 'We preach Christ crucified' should be our motto. Discussion and systematic lecturing will seldom

do much good among plain people. Nothing will keep us right but a daily experience of the value of these first principles. If we live as we ought, our own feelings will perhaps be our best guide."

6th. "Find out what is the highest and best form of religion—that which brings to myself most holiness and happiness, and does most good to my fellow-men—and be content with nothing less. If this principle had been fully acted upon what might I have been?"

7th. "This thought has been upon my mind to-day—souls are sacrificed upon the altar of etiquette."

12th. "I have reason to be thankful. All that I have asked has been in substance given. During this week I have not prayed in vain. I feel that God is good. I hope for still more next week. I know this hope, so far from being displeasing to Him, will be approved. He is not like men; He delights to give. And to those who ask most He gives most."—Many things will excite the wonder of glorified saints on reviewing their earthly course. But probably nothing more than the contracted views too generally entertained of the Divine benevolence. A heathen, on hearing many of our prayers, would conclude that the object of our worship needed persuasion in order to enrich us with spiritual good. Does not all His conduct, however, especially that consummating act, the gift of His only-begotten Son for our redemption—do not all His promises—declare that He is seeking to induce us to accept His blessings? What an unfolding of His benevolence is that inspiring appeal of Paul: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" O penitent sinner! O timid believer! why shouldest thou hesitate to expect *instant* and unutterable good? Hearken

to the voice that is now addressing thee: "Open *thy* mouth *wide*, and I *will* fill it."

13th. "Passages of Scripture often come powerfully to my mind. There appears a beauty, a fulness, an infinity, about all that God has said. This has not been the case until lately. I will be thankful for what God has done, and look for still greater things."

20th. "I will endeavour this week in prayer to seek a present blessing. This is the only way to get on. It is only by being continually blessed now that religion can advance."

21st. "How much time is spent in thinking about things when we ought to be doing them. I want more promptitude."

The style of his preaching now underwent considerable alteration. It became more simple, pointed, and practical. That good effects should soon visibly result is only what might be expected. In a letter to me dated the 27th, he says,—"I spend more time than I ever did in the study of God's word. *A deep experimental acquaintance with it is the only real source of power in the pulpit.* The effects of this study have been seen in the results of my preaching. I have every reason to hope that I do not now preach in vain. Many of the people have been anxious during the last two or three weeks to talk with me on the sermons of the previous Sunday. One sermon, on being 'born again,' particularly impressed three of my oldest hearers. Yesterday morning I preached from these words—'Brethren, pray for us,' and the effect was visible. We had a special prayer-meeting in the afternoon, and a larger congregation at night than I have ever seen here. I am much favoured in the villages. The houses are full and the people attentive. I have removed our week-day services into private

houses as the chapel was cold and uncomfortable. We get more to attend, but strange to say, some of the people object. Here is the very principle which has been the bane of the church in all ages—a preferring the mode to the essence—the means to the end.

"I have lately written but one sermon in the week, and I have some thoughts of abandoning the practice of preparing finished compositions for preaching. I am inclined to think them unsuitable. The design of preaching is not to exhibit minute delineations of thought, but grand truths. I shall not however dispense with writing entirely. I shall generally have a representation by a few apt and striking words of almost every idea I intend to utter. I wish to combine the advantages of previous preparation with freedom of speech in delivery."

It was a frequent practice with Mr. Hessel after having engaged in the discussion of some important topic, to write out the arguments employed by both parties, and arrange them in their natural order. By this means his views on the subject not only became more clear, but were either confirmed or modified. While at Northallerton he was in the habit of meeting with a sceptic, with whom he sometimes engaged in discussion. The following is an outline of the argument employed by him on one occasion: "You see much that is good—you know what to *do*—you see only a very small part of God's works. If you were really honest you would admire what is good; act up to what you know; and leave what is mysterious to be explained hereafter. This is plainly the safest and wisest course. You cannot deny that goodness and happiness are desirable. You cannot deny that the Bible makes many both good and happy. What it does for thousands it may do for all—for *you*. How can you excuse yourself for not seeking to be good and happy by the best means to be found? Should

some sad consequences overtake you, you will have no reason to complain."—I never learnt that any good resulted from these discussions. Nor do I think such discussions desirable. Except in the case of *earnest* and youthful *inquirers*, scepticism has its seat in the heart. And when you have silenced the sceptic, as you easily may do by such a course of reasoning as is here sketched, what have you achieved? His mortification. Nothing more, save possibly your own elation.

"The path of life is straight and narrow. While we are upon it we can be in no doubt which way we are going, for its direction is easily seen."—Some God-fearing persons will feel they cannot accept this. With earnest desires for light they walk amid gloom, or, it may be, darkness. This is to be attributed however, either to bodily temperament or to defective views of Divine truth. Old Testament saints were invited to "walk in the light of the Lord." And Christ publicly proclaimed: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Assuredly it is the Christian's privilege to walk in light. "If *thine* eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light."

"I have lately been paying some attention to the theology of the Methodists," he writes to me on the 28th: "There is much in it which we should do well to make our own. In general we are too lax in urging holiness; there is not a sufficiently earnest desire after deliverance from sin. We want the spirit which animates some of Charles Wesley's hymns. I know nothing which would excite so much hostility in certain quarters as to advocate the doctrine of Christian perfection. Yet why should it? It is not difficult to divine the cause. Whatever may be attained in this life we should aim at, we should pray for nothing less than perfection—to be redeemed from all iniquity.

"I hope I am getting clearer views of divine truth, indeed of all truth. At the same time I may say without the least affectation that I never felt my own ignorance so much as now. How little our puny minds can grasp of what God has revealed! We have not yet fathomed the depth of this one proposition:—'God is love.' It is remarkable that it is never said God is justice. 'God is light'—'I am the truth'—'God is love!' When shall we understand these? All other studies are insignificant compared with the study of them."

29th. "Some persons appear to live for the special purpose of searching out difficulties. Their eyes have got a microscopic power, and can see mountains in molehills. When will the work of prejudice which the devil has reared, (for no doubt it is his doing,) be destroyed? Were it not that the spiritual interests of thousands are suffering it might be laughed at. But it is a serious evil. O that I had a voice of thunder to defend the cause of common sense! The world is dreaming of its wisdom, when, alas, it is but increasing its folly. The system of dividing what God has joined, and joining what God has divided—of going contrary to nature and the Bible, cannot end well."

April 4th. "Prayed that God would spare my life. I have asked largely—that I might be the means of spreading the knowledge of His salvation to thousands. I hope I am willing to labour and even suffer for this end. I have no doubt He can cure my body. He can exert influence for this purpose upon my physical frame, or direct me to the use of those material agencies which will. He that is now causing the earth to bring forth and bud can heal my lungs. It grieves me to think that I have done so little for God; and if it be His blessed will, I would not leave this world until I have done the work for which my capacities fit me."

7th. "I never felt my need of more religion so much as

now. O for more light and love! I must practice more self-denial. It is often well to take the most rugged path merely on this account—it will strengthen the soul, and fit it for hardship and trial."

8th. "Strong desires this morning to be filled with the love of God. I must not rest satisfied until I am. God can do it. He has done it. What He has done for others He can do for me. Let me then wait every moment for this blessing."

"The business of preaching appears very different from what it formerly did. In order to attract a congregation, and move upon it with power and effect, one's resources must be very extensive—much more so than I have been wont to imagine. It is not the power of saying something good at the time that is needed, but the power of saying the most fitting thing."

"There is much in the manner of the Methodist preachers I should do well to copy; of course I speak of the best of them. Their diction is plain but energetic. They seem to understand the character of a sermon better than any class of men I have heard. There is a negligence of minor elegancies, and the attention is directed to the grand result."

"I do not know that I have anything particular to write about," he says to his Uncle Campbell on April 10th, "although I have taken up my pen with the hope of finding something that may be either pleasant or profitable. To-morrow, all being well, I shall leave for Kirkby-Stephen, in Westmoreland, to spend a few weeks with my friend Mr. Priestley. My health continues to improve, and will, I have reason to hope, be ultimately established. We ought not to forget however that all things are in the disposal of God. He can make one law of nature counteract another, and when our wisdom is baffled, His is often most signally

displayed. We too much forget these words—'He is not far from every one of us' 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' In seeking health we ought to connect prayer with the means we employ. Some may call this superstition, but they 'know not what they say.' I am persuaded that to accompany prayer with medicine is most rational. There is much practical atheism among those who profess belief in God.

"I am still bent on going to India. That, in all probability will be my destination if I am spared. The more I think upon the subject, the stronger do the reasons appear. It will be a work of trial and sacrifice, but what great or good thing can be done without these? If the missionary has peculiar trials he has also peculiar consolations. The religion which he preaches will prove his support, and the greater his self-denial the greater enjoyment will he realize. 'As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' This is the secret which explains the conduct of a class of men whom the world has wondered at, and been unable to understand.

"I often revert to the time I spent under your roof with peculiar feelings. I am persuaded it will have a very important influence upon my character and destiny. It was one of the arrangements of an all-wise Providence for my good. It led me to think upon a class of subjects to which otherwise I should probably never have turned my attention. Men must *think* in order to speak and act worthily. It is most interesting to trace the influences by which our characters are formed. And how often do we find that what appeared to be most against us is that which we most needed.

"I hope that both you and my dear aunt are seeking to live in the enjoyment of true religion. One thing in my intercourse with you I deeply regret, it is that I did not lay the things which belong to your peace more plainly

before you. This I have always felt a delicate and difficult thing. However I hope that you now know the way; walk in it. Your stay upon earth is uncertain, and if the Bible be true, there is but one way to heaven. I have of late been led to use great plainness of speech in my preaching, for I am persuaded that many are going the wrong way deceived with the idea that they are religious. What folly it is to deceive ourselves! The truth must come out some day. Nothing else than the 'love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us,' will answer the purpose. It will make us happy in this world, and fit us for heaven. We may all have it, and have it *now*. There is nothing to hinder us but our own carelessness and unbelief. You will know my motive for mentioning these things. Perhaps in a short time we shall part on earth. I wish us to meet in heaven."

On the next day he wrote: "It is a beautiful morning but I do not feel as usual. This going away unsettles me, as I have an impression that I shall not return. I leave the result of my labours with God. The seed is sown: may it produce an abundant harvest!"—This impression proved correct. A stated pastor was shortly afterwards chosen.

The importance he attached to the use of the pen led him to write occasional reflections which occurred on reading the Bible. The following are specimens. They are entirely of a practical and devotional character.

Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. Matt. xviii. 5.—"If I receive kindly the humblest of Christ's followers He will regard it as done to Himself. No man must be disregarded because he is poor or ignorant. I must give to every disciple the cordial hand of brotherly love. Proud human nature cannot stoop

to this, but if I learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart I shall be able to do it."

"What could the Saviour mean when He said, *Lo, I am with you always*, &c.? I could not desire a better mode of expressing this promise. To be with us is more than to help us. I have attempted to teach the people. Has Christ been with me? If He has, where are the results of His presence? I fear He has not, and the reason must be looked for in myself. I have thought myself sufficient. Whilst I have formally sought His assistance my chief reliance has been upon myself. I have depended upon my sermons, and looked for results in proportion as I have been successful in preparing and preaching them. No wonder so little good has resulted."

If any man desire to be first the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. Mark ix. 35.—"It is so even now. Those who are most ambitious for a high place in the church will be found occupying the lowest. May not those who aim at literary greatness, however distinguished they may be, be performing the very drudgery in the service of the church—taking the lowest kind of work—be hewers of wood and drawers of water—servants of all?"

And show how great things God hath done unto thee. Luke viii. 39.—"This must be the great means of extending the kingdom of Christ. Those who have experienced His pardoning love and sanctifying grace must tell it to the world, and invite others to apply to the Saviour. It is but right that those who have been cured should spread abroad the fame of the Physician. Every one stands in need of Him, and if, without shame or fear, we tell what He has done for us, many will be induced to apply."

The elect cry to God day and night. Luke xviii. 7.—"Let no man conclude that he is one of God's elect until

he has this mark. It is those who pray without ceasing, who pray and never faint, that are truly the people of God. All others are in a doubtful state."

Unto the edifying of itself in love. Eph. iv. 16.—"Love is the blood of the body of Christ which circulates through every member. It is through this the body increases. At the last supper Christ spoke much about brotherly love, for He knew its importance in order to the fulfilment of His purposes of mercy. In proportion as this blessed principle pervades a Christian society will be its usefulness."

Let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. Eph. v. 3.—"It is dangerous to talk about evil. When images of sin are brought before the mind they are not easily got rid of. We should keep the appearance of sin from us as far as our duty to sinners will permit."

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 1 Tim. vi. 8.—This is true philosophy. If I imbibe the spirit which dictated these words, I shall save myself much anxiety and misery, and secure a great amount of happiness."

Having no evil thing to say of you. Titus ii. 8.—"It must be eminent piety that will secure this. I do not sufficiently calculate the consequences of *little* inconsistencies. Perhaps unhappy impressions have been made upon the minds of many by improper conversation or conduct of mine which I have long since forgotten."

CHAPTER XI.

AT KIRKBY-STEPHEN. Church fellowship—A faithful Minister—The penalty of innovators—Begins to preach at Ravenstonedale—The simplicity of faith—Entire sanctification—"Memorials of Eliza Hessel"—Importance of meditation—Milton's Prose works—The order in which truth should be sought—Renounces Calvinism—Miscellaneous aphorisms.

"A MAN'S heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." This truth was strikingly verified in Mr. Hessel's visit to Kirkby-Stephen. He proposed remaining only four or five weeks. God had an important work for him however in that neighbourhood, and tho' he entered upon it with some reluctance, he continued in it till forced by debility to relinquish it—a space of sixteen months.

An occurrence of ill physical omen transpired in about ten days after his arrival. A stream of blood issued spontaneously from his nose, and defying all attempts to stanch it, continued more than an hour. He was well aware of the significancy of this occurrence. On the next day, which was Sunday, April 23rd, he wrote: "Bled much yesterday; feeble this morning; unable to preach. I sometimes think that God may take me away soon. I have done so little for Christ that I should wish to remain a little longer on earth, if I might be the means of making known His salvation. I prayed that I might be useful here. This prayer may be answered different from my expectation."—Interpreted by subsequent events this sentence appears very remarkable. It would seem as if some prophetic ray had at that moment beamed upon him. He proceeds: "It is my privilege to be perfectly happy what-

ever be the issue. My state of mind is not right if I am not willing to live or resigned to die. *It is of far more importance that I should live well than long.*"

24th. "Intimate intercourse of mind with mind is absolutely necessary to advance the purposes of Christianity. Christ drew His disciples near to Him. He did not give them occasional lectures, but shewed them His mind and heart. The more closely the body of Christ is united together the more will it receive from its head. Whilst we have each a separate communication with Him, we may also receive much from each other. When Christians are cold and distant they cannot be channels of spiritual blessings to each other as Christ intended they should."—He alludes to Class-Meetings in these remarks. These meetings have often been misrepresented, sometimes derided, but they supply a great spiritual want of our nature. They are spiritual marts, where the mourner, the timid, and the tempted, realize special benefit. Of course they may become formal, as may public worship, but conducted by an intelligent and devout leader, they minister largely to edification. Thousands and tens of thousands who would have fainted in treading their path solitarily, have there received the strength which has sped them onward till the goal was reached. Undoubtedly "Christ intended that Christians should be channels of spiritual blessings to each other." Here that intention is carried into effect. Each contributes to the good of all. How can this be otherwise so efficiently and naturally secured? A testimony has recently been furnished to the value of these meetings, which, coming from the lady of a clergyman, will be accepted as impartial. Mrs. Wightman informs us in her "Annals of the Rescued," that she was solicited by some of the outcasts she had reclaimed to establish "a Class-Meeting." Before assenting, she wisely resolved to visit

one, and satisfy herself of its adaptation to accomplish good. "I accompanied James Fuller," says she, "and I must acknowledge that my prejudice vanished. The deep humility of all present, and the wise and apt quotations from Scripture, suited to each individual case, struck me as most remarkable. In wise hands such a meeting must have a rich blessing. I am sure no hypocrite could attend a second time so close a scrutiny; it would be uncongenial to any except the sincere and earnest seeker after Jesus. I adopted the plan, forming separate classes for men and women, limiting each to twelve persons. My husband takes one of the former fortnightly for me. He comes from this class with a radiant face, and tells me it is the sweetest hour he spends. Every one speaks freely of his trials, struggles, &c., asks counsel on special occasions, and gets encouragement from the treasury of God's word. The same truths which appear of general application when heard from the pulpit, go home straight to the heart when spoken at these meetings."

May 6th. "My views of the gospel ministry are becoming more clear. I would fain cherish the expectation that God is preparing me for some useful place in His vineyard. My attention has lately been turned to those grand truths of the Bible, the exhibition of which will transform the world. What truths produce the greatest effect? and what are the best modes of exhibiting them? are inquiries which my mind has been constantly urging. I have every reason to expect I shall find out the truth. What do I want? Many things, but I believe this would comprehend them all —more of the love of God in my heart."

"If I take divine power into the pulpit, (and, praised be God, it is my privilege,) the hearts of men must be affected. I have found that when I speak in the spirit of faith, my words come with a ten-fold power. They lay hold of the

person with whom I am conversing. Had I spoken from myself alone the very same words would have had no power. Here I discover a mighty energy which sinks all merely human influence into nothingness. How far may this be extended, I am led to ask? I cannot tell. I see no limits to it. The more I use it, the more I am convinced that I yet know comparatively nothing of it."

8th. "A faithful minister. He will have a high opinion of his office. Whilst he feels its honourableness he will also feel its responsibility. He will be jealous lest its importance and true dignity should be diminished in public estimation through him. In preaching he will dwell upon those subjects which most concern his hearers. His eye will be constantly spying out their wants, and he will employ his utmost efforts to supply them. An obvious necessity therefore will determine his subjects. He will see some particular thing prominently demanding his attention. And thus a force of thought and feeling will characterize his preaching. He will not be content to go mechanically through a routine of duties. He will seek to improve upon existing things. Advancement—progression—will be the law of his being."

10th. "I feel in danger of having my energies scattered by too great a variety of objects. I want much general knowledge, but I must not lose sight of a few main points. If I had not the Gospel, and did not feel my obligation to preach it, my mind would have no definite aim. It is a great mercy that I know the business of my life. My great grief is that my actions move so tardily after my thoughts, and I fear my thoughts are hindered by the slowness of my actions. I have sometimes thought it would be beneficial to be shut up in a prison a few months, with nothing but my Bible and writing materials. Such a circumstance, however unpleasant, would break up that deplorable stag-

nancy of soul into which I fear I have fallen. The best method of improvement is to confine myself to a very few spirit-stirring books, and to spend much time in thinking and writing."—Beyond doubt this stagnancy was attributable to physical debility. A valuable writer has recently told the public that an immuring would be a great general benefit. "Most men are possessed by the evil spirit of muddle. Their sight resembles that of sheep, or the man half-cured of blindness in the Gospels, who confounded human beings and bushes. The infliction of six months' solitary imprisonment would add immensely to the concentration of thought of multitudes. Louis Napoleon owes his success mainly to Ham. The power of seeing one thing at a time, and seeing that in clear outline, relief, and colour, is that which renders success to any man almost certain."

Here is a beacon light for some readers: "I have got into a wrong way of treating those around me. I measure them by too high a standard, and am grieved because they do not perform what to them are impossibilities. Now if, while keeping the standard high for myself, instead of rigidly applying it to others, I helped them, and cherished thankfulness for any progress they made, I should do much more good and be much more happy."

He who boldly innovates upon current opinions and habits, must expect opposition. Such disturbances are sure to avenge themselves upon their originator. Nor is this perhaps to be regretted. However preponderating the benefit, evil in some form must ensue from innovation, and it is well therefore that it should encounter restraint. It must be admitted that innovators, having strong convictions, not unfrequently express themselves with offensive dogmatism, and have themselves to blame for much of the displeasure they excite. I confess that my friend sometimes thus erred. It is gratifying, however, to find that with

such anticipations as those with which the accompanying extract commences, there should be associated such experiences as those with which it concludes: "If I live, the probability is that my life will be one of trial and suffering. Many of my views will give offence to persons I highly respect. That I cannot help however. The burden is heavy but I must bear it. I am not so anxious about the approbation of what may be termed the respectable part of the religious world as I once was. At one time it seemed the height of earthly happiness to be an object of regard to that class of persons. But I do not much covet it now. I think I can say before God that my chief anxiety is to benefit the mass of the people, and if a sacrifice of reputation be required for this, I am prepared to make it. I wish however to be on good terms with good men of all parties. I feel that those minor things pertaining to religion which at one time engaged much of my attention, are now dwindling into comparative insignificance. They are removing further from the centre of the soul, and their outlines are becoming more faint and shadowy. I do not wish to consider them at all except so far as they affect me practically."

The accompanying paragraph is well worthy the attention of preachers: "The condition of the heathen world and the progress of christianity, should be much oftener brought before the attention of our hearers. We might frequently introduce these topics in our sermons, and occasionally preach upon them. Might we not draw illustrations of the truths we wish to inculcate from our missionary records? Might not motives to christian duty often be derived from the operations of religion in heathen lands? Might not the conduct of some of the converted heathen be made to shame christians at home into a better way? I fear that instead of seizing the most important means of advancing true

religion by preaching, we too often spend the sacred hours of the Lord's day in what is comparatively trifling."

His visit having extended to seven or eight weeks, he began to long for some sphere of labour. The pleasing impression he had made at Ravenstonedale three years before, procured him an invitation to become their temporary pastor. As Crosby-Garret was to share his labours, he accepted the invitation of a kind friend there to become an inmate of his dwelling. That his physical powers were inadequate to effectuate the promptings of his heart was evinced by a slight attack of hemorrhage on the day previous to entering upon his engagement. At the close of the Sunday however—May 14th—he wrote: "Was so much strengthened that I preached with ease. On entering the village I prayed that God would bless my labours here."

On the 17th he says in a letter to his parents: "I am at present in a small village, about three miles from my friend Mr. Priestley. I should most probably have gone back to Northallerton but they have got a minister—at least some one who will remain with them some months. God, however, has found me employment here, and I do not know that my desires could be better met. I preach twice every Sabbath to a room full of attentive and interested people; and in connection with Mr. Priestley I preach in the villages during the week.

"It will give you pleasure to know that, notwithstanding some little things which once would have troubled me, I am very happy. God is every day causing my cup to overflow with goodness. Although I am comparatively a stranger here, the people have been very kind. My delicate state of health excites a sympathy which shows itself in a thousand little acts of kindness I could never have expected. I mention these things to show the goodness of God. We are too apt to forget these smaller mercies of His providence, yet they

are the chief constituents of our earthly happiness. The great lesson we have to learn is to receive and enjoy them as so many testimonials of His never-failing kindness.

"The country here is beautiful. Nature has clothed herself in every variety of beauty. It is very mountainous. There is considerable snow on the summits yet. The hills are generally stocked with small cattle and black sheep, and in some places are very barren. The valleys are intersected with small streams of water which, rustling over a rocky bottom, meander beautifully along. Here and there are fine tracts of cultivated land."

Numerous entries in his Journal attest that it was in no hireling-spirit he entered upon his new sphere. A few extracts will suffice. 17th. "I bless God that I have a strong desire for advancement. There is much yet to be done in me, and I am convinced that he is able and willing to do it. What I peculiarly want is the deep feeling of the value of immortal souls. I want to weep over them, and labour and pray for them. O that God would lead me into a proper way of saving souls!"

19th. "I want some simple plan by which the people may be constantly improving each other. There are difficulties, but they may be overcome."

"When the soul is in a healthy state it quickens all with whom it comes in contact. A virtue goes out of it. Where most of the life of God is received there is most activity. Indolence is one of the fruits of sin."

27th. "I want a more effective way of preaching. The souls of the people are not aroused. My preaching is destitute of many of those qualities essential to great success. It wants a quickening power. There is a great gulf between me and the hearers. I seem to cry to them at a distance and they hear me but faintly. I must get

nearer to them, and pour a tide of quickening thoughts into their very souls."

29th. "How can it benefit a person to tell him that he cannot be delivered from all sin in this life? How would this prayer look: 'Lord pardon all my sins but one?'"—To the first of these questions it would be difficult to find any other than a negative reply. But the second does not furnish a correct representation of the view of those who reject the doctrine of entire sanctification. It is not to the pardon of all sin that the objection is made, but to the practicability of experiencing the extirpation of all sinful desires and emotions prior to the period of death. But are we not taught to pray for this? Does not the Apostle Paul offer by inspiration this prayer: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ?" Does any one doubt whether the Almighty will bestow the blessing for which He encourages us to supplicate? Let him read the verse succeeding, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

June 1st. "We ought not to be content with securing divine influence now and then, the influx should be continual. We should not be content to remain a moment destitute of it. Every hour spent in such state of destitution is an hour of sin and danger. Our souls are open to the inroads of evil from every quarter."

6th. "In heaven every one will see that he is in his proper place. There will doubtless be different degrees of happiness, but there can be no envy. Each one will love his neighbour as himself, and just as soon would he wish to sink lower himself, as to bring those above him to his level. Pride, cursed pride, will be unknown. Let me then seek to cultivate this disposition on earth. God will give me a

far better place here than I deserve, and will lead me to that for which I am most fitted hereafter."

9th "*We can never be completely happy until we have no will but the will of God.* All our misery arises from opposing that will. Happiness is only to be found by pursuing one object—the glory of the Supreme. If we do this, we glide sweetly on the current of His laws. But if we follow our own will His laws are continually operating against us. We are engaged in a fruitless contention with God."

14th. "'The sense of sin forgiven.' There is such a thing. I find it mentioned in the word of God. Thousands have experienced it. I have sometimes doubts about mine being forgiven. May these doubts be removed? I believe they may. They are a great hindrance to my advancement. I travel with a burden on my back."

15th. "The most effectual voice of God to our souls is a still and silent one. When pardoning love and sanctifying grace are conveyed there is a something in the mode of communication which shows the ease with which Omnipotence works. God has no effort to make to save us; on His part the work has long since been done. The only thing requisite is manifestation—we have but to see the great love wherewith He has loved us, and then we love in return." It has been often and truly remarked that the very simplicity of God's method of blessing us with His pardoning love constitutes, in some minds, a barrier to its experience. We are apt to think that a blessing of such magnitude must require some worthiness on our part, to be acquired only by protracted sorrow and prayer. But what merit can there possibly be either in our tears or prayers? We are, and ever must be, unworthy of any blessing God can bestow. Herein appears the glory of His character, that to those not only unworthy, but deserving of His eternal wrath, He bestows salvation as "a free gift." And that no ground

for boasting may exist, and the freeness of His grace be undeniable, it is as accessible to the poorest and most illiterate as to the wealthy and learned—to the greatest as to the least sinner. The sole and universal condition is the heart-acceptance of His own infallible declaration: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We are so constituted that unless we cherish ill feeling toward our neighbour, we cannot believe him to entertain affection for us without experiencing grateful emotion. The object of the Divine Being therefore is to induce us to look at the great love with which He has loved us. By simply "looking" at this love my heart softens, melts, and is transformed into a fountain of gratitude and joy. Hence says God: "Look unto me and *be* ye saved." O! penitent sinner, why shouldest thou continue looking at thyself—thy sins, thy sorrows, thy weakness, thy danger? Look unto Jesus—*only* unto Jesus.

19th. "We ought not to call that forgiveness of sin which is not felt. If I am in bodily health, I feel I am. Suppose I am sick. It may be in the Divine mind to restore me, but I should never say I am restored until I know it. I am guilty. It may be in the Divine mind to forgive me, but I ought not to conclude I am forgiven until I feel the burden of guilt removed, and that I have peace with God."

27th. "God has lately drawn me nearer to Himself, and led me to seek that liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free. I want to think and speak and act freely for Him; to render the loving obedience of a son and not the forced service of a slave. I have sometimes felt as if the chain were about to be broken, and the hour of deliverance were nigh. In the expectation of such an event my soul has been filled with awe, but though I have been comforted

and encouraged, I have not experienced that full enjoyment of God's love which many have. But I still wait. The blessing is of such incalculable value, that if I had to seek it a thousand years I should find an ample reward for all my anxiety and patience."—The blessing which my friend here means was purity of heart. He had latterly much insisted upon it in the pulpit, and become deeply solicitous to experience it. He never did however to his entire satisfaction. And why? Because he viewed it, I believe, too exclusively in relation to our emotional nature. He regarded it as consisting in an exalted state of enjoyment. Many thus err. It is neither desirable nor practicable for our emotions to be kept at a high pitch. A morbid pietism instead of a robust piety would be the result. A constant realization of the Divine presence, originating an intelligent and practical recognition of His authority and devotedness to His service, is "the higher Christian life." Would that every professing Christian exemplified it!

28th. "'And we have known and believed the love which God hath to us.' The knowledge and belief of that love are the means of salvation, of making us love God in return. We must know that God loves us before we can love Him; and how are we to know that except from the fact that He loves every child of Adam. I go and tell a number of sinners that God loves them. If they ask a proof, I tell them that His Son has died for them. Those who believe the message will begin to love God, and this love is salvation. I may judge of the love of God both to saint and sinner from my own feeling when I have most of the love of God within me. I take delight in the true disciples of Christ, and am thankful to God on their behalf. But this does not prevent me from loving those who are yet in sin, it does not in the least abate my desires for their good, but quite the

contrary. Some eminent men have had such love to sinners that they would have laid down their lives to save their bitterest enemy. Here we see a faint representation of the love of God. Those bowels of compassion come from God, and are His likeness in our souls."

"I had to-day a humbling view of my sins. How wonderful that God has so long borne with me! It seems a mystery of love that after all my wanderings I should at last be brought to seek after Him with my whole heart! I feel that I am laid under peculiar obligations to devote myself to the spread of those truths which have come upon me with such quickening power. I am sure I am right; I have no doubt of that. God will not suffer those that cry to Him constantly for wisdom to remain in uncertainty."

July 4th. "I see nothing can be done unless I seek and do the will of God. *If I allow the slightest thing which I believe to be contrary to it, there is an inlet for all kinds of evil.*"

7th. "The law of God is holy, just, and good. So far as I depart from it, I am unholy, unjust, and evil."

8th. "The blood of Christ, which represents all He did and suffered on our behalf, is constantly pleading for *me.* It sustains the same relation to the mercy of God as coin to property. It is a coin constantly payable in heaven. It buys blessings of infinite value for every sinner that presents it. It has procured the good I have enjoyed this day. It shall continue to procure whatever I need, whatever I ask according to the will of God. Its value can never be exhausted. God is well pleased when His children ask largely, for it shows their high opinion of His Son's merits."

14th. "I see that writing may be a most important means of grace. I can often utter my heart as well through my pen as by my voice. It will be well to employ both. I have found writing to help me much in mental prayer."

16th. Sabbath. "I feel to need something which God only can give. There is a certain holy calm—a readiness to every good word and work—a tranquil, yet active spirit of love, which is the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Wherever it is there is the power of God. O that God would speak through me this day, that sinners might hear His voice and live!"

20th. "Wesley's Journal becomes more and more interesting. I must confess I never heard or read of such a man,—and I question whether there has been one since the days of Paul. His life was one intense, unremitting effort for the good of souls. He possessed a peculiar combination of simplicity and dignity, of calmness and fervour. I dare not speak against him, for I feel that I should be speaking against Christ."

"One use of prayer-meetings is this—there are many who have desires towards God but do not know how to express them. When they hear them expressed by others their feelings are kindled. We cannot calculate the good we may receive from hearing a good man pray. He does not approach the mercy-seat alone, he takes many others with him."

27th. "I hope I am now ridding myself of conceits and prejudices. I am willing to learn every thing anew. I wish to be a patient searcher after truth, looking for it wherever God by His providence may lead. I wish to build a temple of truth, and I must build it of tried stones. *Let me guard against speaking either good or evil of the things I know not.* I fear this has led me into many an error, and what is worse, into many a sin. The love of giving an opinion,—of sitting in judgment, is a strong temptation. Lord! guard me from it."

"I am happy to say my life never passed more pleasantly

than at present," he writes to his parents on the 31st. "I have as many outward enjoyments as are necessary, and God has lately led me to seek my happiness more directly from Himself. My future appears more uncertain than ever. But that does not trouble me. I do not wish to know the future. I feel it pleasant to follow as a little child the leading hand of God.

"The people here are busy with their hay. I suppose you will have got yours. There is not much ploughing-land about Kirkby, so that hay-harvest is a very busy time. It is a most enchanting country. I never saw anything like it as it appears in summer. The mountains put on a thousand appearances, according to the state of the clouds and atmosphere. My taste and feelings would prompt me to fix my residence here, but I must listen to a higher voice. I wish to hold myself in readiness to depart whenever God shall call. Here we have no continuing city—we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

"I hope William and my sisters are well. I have a word of advice for them. Seek religion while you are young. Read a portion of your Bible every day—especially read the Gospels. Pray to God every night and morning to bless you, and save you, and give you a *new heart*. I would advise you to commit to memory some of Wesley's Hymns, for they are the best in our language."—How far this counsel operated to secure the results desired is known only to the Omniscient. The three sisters and brother devoted themselves to God in their youth however. William entered the Christian ministry, and is now wielding a powerful influence in the Southern world. The eldest sister, Mary Ann, after promoting the comfort and usefulness of a Christian minister, left him an early widower. The "Memorials of Eliza Hessel" have elicited from the literary organs of public opinion an almost unanimous declaration that "this volume contains the workings of the

inner life of one who deserves to be enshrined in the hearts of young Englishwomen for her many womanly virtues, intellectual acquirements, and sterling piety." Her sun went down while it was yet day, but

> "We live in deeds not years; in thoughts not breaths;
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
> We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
> Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

Sep. 1st. "I often find myself chasing shadows, perplexing myself with new trifles. If I discover any new good thing, I soon make it an idol, and thus do myself an injury."

"There is much work to be done in this place (Ravenstonedale). I must give more time and pains than I have done hitherto. I have no doubt but I shall find an ample reward. *The less care a man bestows upon his ministry the more will he feel its duty a drudgery.* I believe if I rightly attend to my labour it will become my delight."

2nd. "I feel a strong hope that great changes will take place in the world ere long. I sometimes fancy I see new moral elements of mighty power about to burst forth and overwhelm the world with their influence. Beneath the imposing array of moral apparatus which fills the eye of the world, an order of mind is working secretly and slowly, almost unconscious of its own power, and God may employ it largely in the deliverance of the race."—The recent revivals of religion in the United States, the four portions of our United Kingdom, and numerous other parts, remarkably illustrate the correctness of his anticipation.

8th. "Have been at ——. I fear I talked too much about worldly, and too little about spiritual, things. I felt the presence of the old man a restraint. Those who are too wise to learn place themselves in a fearful position. They

cause a channel of God's goodness to be dried up, and remain ignorant of what they lose."

"'Consolation in Christ'—'comfort of love'—'fellowship of the Spirit'—'bowels and mercies!' How little these things are understood by the world! We never meet with any language like this in its literature."

9th. "I have often done wrong both in prayer and study by giving up after the first attempt. This is apt to beget feebleness and fickleness."

12th. "We must have a single eye to the glory of God in all we do. And this is no common attainment. Too often when we engage outwardly in the work of God, we are really doing our own work. Thus our selfish schemes spoil our services and render them unacceptable."

20th. "Deep and protracted meditation is necessary to discipline the soul and enable her to put forth her full powers. There is danger lest she should rest contented with cursory and random efforts."—And there is danger also of not properly digesting our mental food. As in relation to the body, it is not what a man eats but what he assimilates that benefits; so in relation to the mind it is not what he acquires but what he appropriates that is valuable. Meditation is the mental organ of assimilation. It is no less necessary as a means of arranging our mental stores. A tradesman with a small but well-arranged stock will conduct a more successful business than he would with a larger stock all in confusion. Meditation is a powerful agent in the formation of character. It mightily aids the moral, in its struggles against the animal, part of our nature. Young man! would'st thou become possessed of sound knowledge and sterling worth, spend some portion of every day in meditation. Paul well knew the value of the counsel he gave to Timothy: "Meditate on these things."

"Morn is the time to act, noon to endure;
But O, if thou would'st keep thy spirit pure,
Turn from the beaten path by worldling's trod,
Go forth at eventide, in heart, to walk with God."

21st. "There is help laid upon Christ for *me*. I stand in need of continual help, for I find I cannot of myself exemplify my own notions of what is right and excellent. I form plans but cannot execute them. I make resolutions but continually break them. After a thousand disappointments I try again with the most sanguine expectation of success. Thus experience does not teach me wisdom, and I spend my time in fruitless attempts at what I cannot do, but which God is every moment ready to help me to do."

28th. "'Speak to our hearts.' God has a voice that reaches the heart. He does not then so much give us to understand as to feel His word. My understanding has listened to the voice of God, but I fear my heart has often been deaf, so that I have seen the truth as we see objects in a dream, dim and shadowy, but have not felt its quickening power."

5th. "This restless desire, this longing after some sphere of activity that shall call forth every latent capacity of my nature, this unsatisfiedness with the slow, dreamy, snail-paced motion of things with which those around me are so well contented, must have some significance, and tend towards something either greatly good or evil. This element appears to be purely natural, that is, of itself possessing no moral feature."—The relation of natural temperament to religious experience and conduct, merits more attention from the theologian than it has yet received. A great service would be rendered to the cause of truth if some competent writer would thoroughly discuss this subject.

"It is not wise to remain inactive, and wait for impulses.

We must inure the mind to systematic action if we would secure the greatest amount of knowledge and usefulness." —Few utterances in this volume are more worthy the attention of the youthful student. A natural repugnance to toil induces him to abandon composition when thoughts do not flow. It ought to be known, however, that the power of ready thinking is a doubtful good. The prompt-thinker is in danger of being a shallow thinker. Nothing but intense study, severe application, can make an ordinary man a profound thinker. If therefore you would avoid the formation of a bad habit, and the sacrifice of a large amount of time, "inure the mind to systematic action." One of the most distinguished preachers of the present day has recently given the public the benefit of a timely admonition he once received. In the early period of his ministry a member of Parliament, visiting with a mutual friend, was one of his hearers on one occasion. "What a fatal facility of speech that young man has!" said he to his friend at the close of the service. That friend was kind and courageous enough to inform the preacher, and he attributes no small part of his usefulness to it. Take an instance of an opposite kind. Thomas Scott, the Commentator, once expressed great surprise to a friend at the prolific mental powers of many of the writers in the times of the Puritans. He could with difficulty collect thoughts sufficient for a sermon, and they wrote folio volumes. He was industrious however, and he lived long enough to publish as much as many of the writers who had excited his wonder. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich." "The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness."

"Invention, sagacity, and prudence, have been imparted to us by our Creator, and we are accountable for their employment."—This representation is not quite accurate. Invention is a gift; prudence is an acquirement; and sagacity is partly both. Invention may be denied you;

distinguished sagacity may be beyond your reach; but prudence is within the attainment of all. And no quality is of greater personal importance. Its diligent cultivation will save you from a thousand follies, mischiefs, and miseries. A large proportion of the sorrows that afflict us personally, domestically, socially, and nationally, result from imprudence. Thousands of students, as well as others, have lost their health, and many been consigned to a premature grave, through imprudence. Acquire a knowledge of physical laws and of human nature, from books; add to your stock daily by keen observation; and by the practical use of it, you shall secure for yourself the enviable distinction of a wise man.

"Some professing Christians live in the neglect of duties simply because they are not enjoined in the word of God. What a strange spirit does this manifest, to do nothing good—nothing for God, but what they are compelled to do by the iron rod of authority!"—That man can scarcely have learnt the alphabet of Christianity who needs to be told that one object of the Almighty in His moral administration, is to furnish scope for the spontaneous manifestation of our love to Him. He does not sustain to us the relation of a Ruler simply, but of a Father. And what father does not value the deeds prompted by affection much more than mere acts of obedience? If affection be strong, it constrains to outward and practical manifestation. It indicates a cold, selfish, un-Christ-like state of heart to ask for evidence of requirement before we will engage in works of benevolence. The measure of my desire to please and honour God is the measure of my Christianity.

It will have been observed that Mr. Hessel was a great admirer of the old English writers. To cultivate an acquaintance with modern authors to the neglect of these, was, in his view, to drink only at the stream of literature.

Milton was one of his chief favourites. He had read several of his works while at College, and he then wrote: "I think the writings of Milton inimitable. They stand by themselves. There is a majesty in them which inspires awe. His great spirit must have had sources of inspiration different from other mortals. He drank from the purest fountains. He was one whose business is to teach mankind —to elevate the grovelling sentiments of men in general, and to give to this world something of the beauty and grandeur of that which is to come." Latterly he had resumed his intercourse with the noble bard and thus writes: "Reading Milton's Prose Works last night. Met with passages like inspiration. One of the greatest minds that ever appeared in our world bent upon finding out the truth. I never read him without deriving a quickening power which remains with me for some time."

The effects of his admiration are very discernible in the two following extracts: Oct. 4th. "It is doubtless a wise and merciful arrangement of Him who knows what is best for His creatures, that those spirits which are gifted with deepest insight into the nature of things, and invested with a mighty spiritual power, are also subject to many evils and inconveniences from which others are free. There are many things connected with the rank they occupy and the relation they sustain to their fellow-creatures, which make their place in many respects far from enviable. Those whose spiritual eye penetrates farthest into what is good and true and beautiful, have also the clearest perception and the quickest sensibility of evil; so that in their passage through this world, where evil grows in such rank and unweeded abundance, they cannot fail to suffer peculiar annoyance. It is also to be borne in mind that their clear, full, and unreserved utterance of the truth, (for they cannot conceal it) will often wear a rebukeful and condemnatory aspect, and the world has, in all ages, offered not the best

treatment to those who plainly and zealously testify of its evil. When Incarnate Truth dwelt in it He was despised and rejected of men, and nothing less than His blood would glut the deep and dreadful malice which the world He came to enlighten bore towards Him; and it is no wonder that they who learn of Him and seek to walk in His footsteps should be called to share His reproach, if not His sufferings. It will not seldom happen that the man who meddles with wisdom will effectually separate himself from his species, and although he pine for the companionship of those who are of the same mind and heart, yet as such are rare, he will not unfrequently have to journey alone. The mere civilities of social life, and those interchanges beyond which the great mass of men look for nothing better, will not satisfy the cravings of his soul. He pants for a higher and nobler communion, in which all the deep and heaven-tending thoughts and feelings of his heart may be drawn forth and reflected from some kindred soul. This privilege being seldom allowed him in this darksome and scattered state of existence, he is in a manner compelled to stay himself upon the Great Author of his being, and happily is led to feel his own nothingness."

"The word of God is so constructed—its wonderful truths are so arranged—that the most ignorant, the weakest man, though by nature but a fool, if he come to it with a single eye, simply desirous to obtain a knowledge of God and salvation, shall not miss his way: he shall be infallibly secured from fatal error. But if the mightiest intellect come to these inspired records with any other desire than to find out that truth which most concerns it, all its powers of understanding, of reasoning, and of judging, shall prove no safeguard from error; it must inevitably go wrong, and out of the very truth of God it will extract a lie. It by no means follows that because we read our Bibles and profess belief in them, that we have come or are coming to a

knowledge of the truth. *The truth must be sought in a certain order, and the most necessary truths must be sought first.* If we occupy ourselves with that which does not immediately concern us, to the neglect of that which does, who can calculate the consequences? Let us first satisfy those inquiries which most solemnly claim our attention, and proceeding in this narrow path we shall in due time be led into all truth."—Have we not here an explanation of a class of recent facts which have perplexed many persons? A considerable number of intelligent and even learned men have migrated from their intellectual territory—some to popery, others to scepticism. We cannot help asking how is this? And what explanation so natural or so satisfactory can be supplied, as that here set forth? The object with which a man comes to the study of the Bible generally determines what he shall find there. The feelings are a lens through which moral truth is viewed, and as is its purity so will be the value or worthlessness of the impressions produced. Vast and weighty was the instruction conveyed in our Lord's reply to the inquiry of His disciples: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not *enter* into the kingdom of heaven." As it is not philosophy that the Bible teaches, it is not for philosophers, as such, it is written. It demands a child-like teachableness of all to whom it reveals its treasures. A difficult requirement! Need we wonder it should be mistrusted, misinterpreted, rejected? Human nature is the same now as in the days of the Apostles, and they tell us that Christianity was "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness." Here is ample encouragement for the docile inquirer: "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." And here is solemn warning for

those who receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved : "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie."

"My views of things have undergone an entire change since I came here. I shall go back into Yorkshire a very different man. I am thankful to Him who has led me by a way I have not known; and though far from satisfied, I am conscious that I am much nearer truth than I was some months ago; and I am not without hope, that ere long, she will rise with her full-orbed and cloudless lustre upon my poor soul, wearied with a long night of error, doubt, and uncertainty. And of this I dare rest assured, that if I do but know and believe the truth upon those momentous matters which belong to God's glory and man's welfare, my abode on earth, be it long or short, will not be without some profit to the world. Every day let me rise more and more above its vanities, and preserve only so much sympathy with its affairs as will help me to lead it to its highest good."—The change here spoken of relates to certain points in theology. A prayerful and protracted inquiry issued in the conviction that the views of John Wesley were more scriptural than those of John Calvin. He knew well that he should incur the displeasure of some of his friends by avowing this change, and that a new and perhaps gloomy complexion would be given to his outer life, should he be spared. Conscious however of the purity of his motives, and strong in his convictions, he confidently committed the issue to God. The interest excited, and the good effected, by his preaching, induced the trustees, though regretting this change, to desire a continuance of his services, to which he readily consented.

The following remarks are miscellaneous :—

"We are apt to look for the sources of evil in outward objects, whereas they are generally within. If we take

cold we blame the air, when the real cause is often a bad state of the body. If we are unhappy, we blame the persons and things around us, tho' the real cause is a discontented heart."

"Persons undergoing a process of moral renovation must often change their sentiments on important subjects."

"It is not well to generalize before gaining acquaintance with a great number of facts. Hence the folly of attempting to teach grammar before there is any acquaintance with the language."

"Evening readings in families may be a great source of enjoyment and benefit. They have not only an immediate influence upon the different members during the time of reading, but must be felt in all their intercourse with each other. Their thoughts will be directed into the same channel, and moulded into a similar form. The enjoyment of friendship arises from the interchange of ideas upon subjects with which friends are mutually acquainted, and the more these subjects can be multiplied the greater is the attraction between mind and mind. How far more delightful is such a scene than the gloomy stillness or the noisy scandal and impertinent chatter which pervade many firesides."

"The hypothetical mode of reasoning is like trying a number of keys to open a lock. The inductive mode is like forming a key from the lock itself. The former may be right, the latter must."

"The Spirit wanted *facts*, grand illustrations of truth. The work of Christ supplied them. He now wants not the means of drawing sinners to God."

"Our temporal wants increase in proportion to the care and labour we spend in supplying them."

CHAPTER XII.

AT KIRKBY-STEPHEN. The inestimable worth of love—Affecting view of sin—The importance of frankness—John Wesley—William Carvosso—The power of faith—Condition of Ministerial success—Hemorrhage—Ambition deplored—Gratitude—Latent strength possessed by all—The energy of sacred truth—Joins the Wesleyans—On an ornate-style for the pulpit—Returns home—Death.

THE manifest increase of Mr. Hessel's spirituality during the last twelve months of his life, affords his friends unutterable solace and delight. An interesting youth, whose emaciated frame and pallid face and bright but sunken eyes too plainly indicate that consumption has secured a fatal grasp, is an affecting spectacle. But the sadness is unutterably deepened when the victim is unwilling to believe the fact, and is revolving projects that relate only to his own aggrandizement. To pious friends such a spectacle is piercing. The emotions experienced by Mr. Hessel's friends were the opposite of these. It was painful to witness his body daily wasting, and his vigorous intellect becoming gradually shorn of strength, but it was joyous to witness the progressive maturity of the spirit in wisdom and holiness. So visibly was the grain ripening for the heavenly garner that it formed a frequent topic of conversation among his friends. On Oct. 6th he writes: "The glorious light of the sun breaks into my little parlour through the foliage which overhangs my window. May the Sun of Righteousness break through the tangled boughs of worldliness and unbelief which overhang the entrance of my heart. Nothing in the universe is of any value but love. It is every thing. It contains all good. If I only love nothing has power to hurt me. Whatever wants I may experience are supplied by love. It plants a power in

the soul next to almighty. If I only love, it matters little how much I am hated or despised, for Christ says 'If any man love me he shall be loved of my Father, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.'"—Beautiful sentiments for a wasting man to utter! many a reader will probably exclaim. But are they not important sentiments for a vigorous man to cherish? Is it true that "nothing in the universe is of any value but love?" It is. What can I carry into Eternity but the thoughts and feelings with which my mind and heart are stored? My knowledge, experiences, purposes, and mental and moral habits, I cannot leave behind. But what will all else avail if I have not love? That is not simply the grand qualification for admission to the place we designate heaven, it constitutes its blessedness. God can impart nothing to His most honoured saints so valuable as love. He has in fact no higher blessedness for Himself. Every saint in heaven will be rich or poor just as he possesses much or little love. And is it not so now? Do wealth, social status, or the applause of man make me truly enviable? These are contingent benefits. They may prove an evil instead of a good. Possessed of any or all of these I may be discontented and unhappy. But let love fill and rule my heart, and "I have learnt" one of the most difficult lessons God is desiring to teach me, "in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." I can bear disappointment, provocation, reproach, contempt, and pain. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Truly, therefore, of all possessions love is the most valuable. What consummate folly therefore are they perpetrating who eagerly pursue other things and neglect this! Reader! act thou more wisely!

> "From love we fell. Love only can restore
> The glorious image which at first we wore;
> And bring earth's wanderers to their home above
> In God's similitude; for God is Love."

"No view we can take of sin appears to me so terrible as that which represents it as a principle, a tendency, a fountain seated in the very centre of the soul, and ever sending forth its filthy streams. If, in a few short years, we are ready to ask, it has wrought so much misery, what must it do in the course of ten thousand years? And oh, appalling thought! what must be its disastrous results throughout eternity? Its fruitful womb is constantly bringing forth new monsters, and every birth, for endless ages, will continue to surpass its predecessors in horribleness. In this world it is hedged in by restraints, but in a future state it will run on in uncurbed malignity."

10th. "I have now no doubt but that prayer is highly conducive to health, and will prove the best counteractive to the debilitating effects of study. It puts the heart into a state of vigorous action, and causes all the powers of the soul to move in harmony."—It is well known that animal spirits exercise a mighty influence upon physical vigour; and the bright consciousness of our Heavenly Father's love cannot fail to quicken the animal spirits. The intelligent Christian is supplied with a thousand facts unknown to others and unsuspected by them, illustrative of that scripture declaration, "godliness is profitable unto all things."

25th. "I need be under no fear as to my mental improvement. The process is carried on in a thousand ways which escape my observation. If only I keep in view the end of my being, I may safely leave the rest with God. Inferior ends will not be lost, but be drawn by cords too delicate for me to discern. But *if I aim at less than the end of my being I shall lose everything.* If I daily implant useful, beautiful, and holy thoughts, they cannot fail to become fruitful and multiply."—Experience supplied this sentiment, and cheering, I am persuaded, would be its effect. The absence of that rush of mental vigour which he formerly

experienced had caused him much solicitude. He regarded it as the death-knell of progress. Let it cheer all invalids seeking improvement to know that he discovered this to be an error. Pleasurable as it is to realise daily progress, in the mental as in the vegetable world rapid growth is not always durable. The fungus springs up in a night, but a day almost measures its existence. Succulent plants may boast themselves against the oak for rapidity of development, but the stately tree survives the decay of many generations of them. Impetuosity usually supplies the student with much to undo. The man of observant and contemplative habits cannot fail to be constantly acquiring knowledge, and he is at the same time acquiring the elements of a worthy character. A valuable mental and moral process is going on within us, utterly unconscious though we may be of it, if we are daily implanting useful, beautiful, and holy thoughts. Eventually the results will pleasingly appear.

"Never saw so clearly the importance of being frank with those I associate with. There is something omnipotent in a free and ingenuous intercouse of the soul. It unlocks the hearts of those with whom you converse, and sweetly constrains them to surrender their treasures. Thus you open to yourself a thousand sources of information inaccessible to others. You carry on a profitable trade where others gain nothing."

26th. "I am called to bear witness to the goodness and grace of God both by my preaching and conduct. Through me all men should see what God is able to do for His creatures. I should be a specimen of the excellence and happiness which results from loving Jesus Christ. I should be known as an advocate of all that is good, and an uncompromising foe of all that is evil."—Omit the reference to preaching in the first sentence, and what person in

Christendom may not appropriate this entire paragraph? Every Christian professor owns the obligation to "abhor that which is evil," and to let his light so shine before men that they may see his goodworks, and glorify his Father which is in heaven. And is any man released from this obligation by simply disavowing religion? So, it would appear, many persons think. But what would any tradesman think of the reasoning capability of the creditor who should assure him that because he felt reluctant to cancel his debt, he was discharged of the obligation so to do? How can the refusal to recognize a claim annul it? It is as much your duty, my young friend, to be a "specimen of the excellence and happiness which results from loving Jesus Christ" as it was John Hessel's.

31st. "My poor heart, contracted alas by selfishness, is ready to burst with the thought which swells these beautiful lines:

> 'Ah, Lord! enlarge our scanty thought,
> To know the wonders thou hast wrought;
> Unloose our stammering tongues, to tell
> Thy love immense, unsearchable!'"

"'O that my heart were filled with God!' How can I do anything right when my heart is wrong? My thinking, speaking, conduct, will all be impregnated with a poisonous element. If my heart were filled with God a virtue would be continually going from me. I have long had this conviction that it is easier to live without sin than with a little sin."

In a letter to his parents dated Nov. 24th, he says: "My congregations are very good. In the evening the chapel has lately been filled. I now see that I do not labour in vain. Some, I have no doubt, have been truly converted, and many are inquiring what they must do to

be saved. A few believers who had sunk into a lukewarm state are quickened, and I believe great good will be done.

"You may be anxious to know what are my intentions as to the future. Do not be surprised when I tell you that I have none; at least I wish to have none. I have devoted myself to the service of my great Master, and He may send me where He pleases. I endeavour to act upon His advice, 'Take no thought for to-morrow,' and I can testify that none are so happy as those who are 'careful for nothing.' I am doing the work of God, and I dare trust Him with my wages. My temporal comfort and welfare have lately given me no care whatever; my wants are at present supplied, and will be, I doubt not, to the end. I make these remarks that you may moderate your parental anxiety respecting me. The path of worldly ease and respectability has been laid open to me, but I shunned it. I wish to be the instrument of doing the greatest amount of good to my fellow-men, and all who practically live under the influence of this desire, must be prepared to make sacrifices."

Dec. 1st. "It is a great power and privilege which God gives to the man whom He enables to call into full activity the souls of those he associates with. Such a spirit is placed in a peculiarly favourable position for gathering knowledge and wisdom. The minds around him present him with their best offerings, and where others find nothing he will gather a rich abundance."

13th. "I do not know a finer model of perspicuous writing than John Wesley. He has a wonderful method of calmly placing the word of faith before his readers. I seldom read a sentence from his works without experiencing a quickening power which abides with me."

"15th. I see that God rewards everything I do for Him even now. To this statement I cannot remember any ex

ception. For every thing I give up I receive a hundred-fold."—What value, it may be asked, attaches to this testimony? What had he renounced worthy of mention? I doubt not he could have named several things, some of which were probably of too private a nature to be communicated. Two or three however readily present themselves. It required an effort to abandon literary projects; to conquer all desire for a sphere of activity where his talents would find intelligent and admiring appreciation as well as stimulus, and devote himself to a population consisting chiefly of rustics; his avowal of a change in doctrinal theology had subjected him to some misrepresentation; and he now probably abandoned the hopes of connubial bliss he had previously cherished. These things may look little to the reader's eye, but to his heart they *felt* great. It was very nearly his "all" that he gave up. And in what did his recompense consist? Not in forms that appeal to sense, but in treasures that enrich the heart—in the graces of resignation, contentment, thankfulness, and love. He proved the truth of that declaration of our Saviour, which many appear unwilling to believe, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"—that real and enduring riches are elevated sentiments; pure aspirations; benevolent purposes; and deeds by which sorrow and suffering are alleviated; ignorance dispelled; and mental and moral capabilities quickened, unfolded, and matured. It is not what a man has, but what he is, that he properly possesses. Hence the Apostle Paul represents himself and fellow-apostles "as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Hence also the gospel-messenger is authorized to say to the most indigent of Christ's true followers, "All things are yours." And John Hessel's experience may be yours, dear reader. "Every one," says Christ, "that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or chil-

dren, or lands, *for my name's sake*, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

When he felt himself the subject of spiritual languor, he would frequently write such sentiments as were fitted to quicken his emotions. The following two extracts were evidently written for such a purpose :—

"Jesus my Saviour knows as much of *me*, and takes as much care of my soul, as if I were the only sinner whose salvation He is effecting. He is not a moment absent from me. Not a thought arises in my heart that He does not see. Not a prayer do I offer which He does not hear. When I walk in His way, He is pleased with me ; when I depart from it He is displeased. These are all certain truths. Let me live in the constant recognition of them."

17th. "Jesus has all power in heaven and earth. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. He was manifested to take away *my* sins. He is faithful and just to forgive my sins, and cleanse *me* from all unrighteousness. He has promised to give *me* a new heart. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall make *me* free from the law of sin and death. I shall have that perfect love which casteth out fear ; the peace which passeth all understanding ; and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

"If the mind be in the least disposed to shrink from the truth, a thousand influences are ready to bear it to the region of doubt and error. False doctrines of every shade and hue, dressed up by the father of lies to resemble the truth, will be presented to the wavering and unwary. One false notion prepares the way for another, until the soul is cheated of its treasure, and having thrown away the truth of God, spends its strength in nourishing and propagating a lie."—The influence of the heart upon the operations of the intellect, while admitted as a general truth, is far from

being practically recognized to the extent its importance demands. One of the first principles instilled into the youthful mind should be loyalty to truth, especially revealed truth. Solomon had doubtless proved the value of this counsel: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

"It has been suggested that I shall be able to prepare a better sermon to-morrow morning. That may be, but it shall not prevent me from preparing it now."

21st. "I must follow out my own principles, and not burden myself with the plans of other men. There is a light which will lead me to the shortest and best way of doing the utmost good. Let me steadily follow that, and all will be well. I am sure it comes from God, and it will therefore lead to Him. I had rather be William Carvosso than the most learned man or popular preacher in Europe. *Faith infinitely surpasses in value the largest accumulation of human knowledge.*"—And who was William Carvosso, some readers will probably inquire? He was a small Cornish farmer, possessed of neither genius nor talents. He could not boast an ordinary education, for he was sixty-five before he could write. The highest honour he attained or coveted was that of being a Methodist class-leader, though he occasionally gave a public exhortation. His name, during his life, was known in few circles beyond the boundary of his native county. But there he was extensively known and greatly loved. His views of the power of faith were so luminous and vivid, and his experience of it so palpably rich and blessed, that thousands through his simple instructions and prayers emerged from moral gloom into sunshine. His usefulness, as set forth in a small biography, entitled "The efficacy of Faith in the Atonement of Christ," excites astonishment. As he advanced in life his services were sought extensively in various parts of Cornwall. "At one

place, Cambuslang, where he went from house to house during the day, and held class-meetings at night, seven hundred or more were hopefully converted to God. A simple circumstance induced him to make an extraordinary effort to learn to write. He mastered the art and used it too. His letters and his autobiography are quite voluminous, and very respectable in style; and what is more than all, have been the means, perhaps, of more good than his personal labours during all the sixty years of his distinguished usefulness." It evinces the thoroughness of Mr. Hessel's subjection to spiritual influences that he should prefer to be William Carvosso than the most learned man or popular preacher in Europe.

"But few seem to understand the power, perhaps I may say, the omnipotence of faith. Few are aware of the stupendous results it is capable of effecting when exercised upon the glorious verities of redemption by Jesus Christ—the wonderful transformation it can produce on the soul of man, and the mighty control it can exert over the circumstances of life. The man who is full of faith exerts a mighty energy, and scatters invaluable blessings. Many Christians little know how great a loss they and the world sustain by their feebleness of faith. This robs them of enjoyment, paralyzes their efforts to do good, and imparts a dwarfish character to their virtues. We ought not to rest until our faith is in a state of constant vigour. In order to attain this we must keep the word of faith present to our minds. Let us also seek the company of faithful men, for beyond a doubt the spirit of faith is communicated. The power possessed by men full of faith of dispelling the doubts and fears of weak believers, is truly astonishing."

"A religion which does not lead to purity of heart is worthless—a mere form. From the heart proceed the words and actions, and if it be not pure, or desiring purity, in vain shall we look for purity of life."

Here is evidence how constantly his mind was on the alert: 27th. "I am convinced it is better to have some usual place for prayer. We are much affected by association, and the remembrance of past blessings will often draw me to the place of prayer."

"I have got wrong; I have been fighting against the carnal mind with its own weapons. Ridicule, sarcasm, and scorn, are not for a soldier of Jesus Christ. They may provoke and irritate but they cannot conquer. Simple truth and fervent love are the only weapons I must employ. And they are mighty through God."—Undoubtedly sarcasm, ridicule, and scorn have a use. The two former may sometimes be appropriately directed to persons, the latter must be restricted to things. Meanness and dishonourableness of conduct may justly provoke scorn. But when may sarcasm and ridicule be employed? Our Saviour's conduct supplies a partial answer. All mental and moral forces were at His command, and He did not hesitate to employ sarcasm. But it was against incurable perversity only that he employed it. When we encounter this foe we may safely wield this weapon. Insufferable egotism may be deemed a fit subject for ridicule. The power of ridicule and sarcasm, it must be confessed, is a perilous possession. Great vigilance and self-control are requisite to prevent their misuse.

"I see more than ever the necessity of self-denial in the service of God. A life of godliness is incompatible with sloth and self-indulgence. Self-denial in little matters is useful: it prepares for greater exercises of it. A habit of self-denial gives the spirit a mastery over the flesh. There is frequent occasion for it—in food, in sleep, in conversation, in reading. In conversation one is often tempted to tell amusing but unprofitable tales. Ministers should be eminently self-denying, spiritually-minded men. Their voca-

tion imperatively requires these things,—without them they will be powerless. An effeminate coward is more suitable for a soldier, than a slothful, self-indulgent man for a minister of Jesus Christ."

"If the force and meaning of any part of God's word is to be explained away there will not be wanting some plausible comment, exhibited with the artifice of worldly wisdom, and sanctioned by the authority of a great name. Men have never to go far in search of error as a quietus for the conscience."

"I feel determined to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. I do not ask, 'where wilt thou lead me?'"

Jan. 1st. "I have not that solemnity of feeling which the beginning of a year ought to inspire. In my enfeebled state all I can do is to cleave unto the Lord. The crown of life is worth striving for, and if I endure to the end I shall most assuredly obtain it."

A circumstance occurred on this day which testified affectingly, that though Mr. Hessel was one of the undemonstrative, he was not cold-hearted. Mrs. Priestley had been ill two or three days, and at her request he visited her. On he and I jointly entering her room, to our unutterable surprise she appeared in the act of dying. On the arrival of medical aid we left her. Our grief smote us with dumbness, and to my regret he soon left me. He retired however only to plead with God on her behalf. He spent most of the evening in prayer, and begged that if her restoration could be granted on no other terms, he himself might become the sufferer. Whatever explanation may be given of the facts, she began to recover, and he was seized with a violent attack of tic-doloreux, which, in spite of powerful remedial means, continued several days, and threatened to consign him to the grave. His Journal contains this record on the event: "Five p.m. To all appearance Mrs. P—— is near death.

My soul has been much troubled, and I have been pleading with God for her life. I have a peculiar hope that I shall prevail. I have thought on those words of Jesus: 'this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God.' 'All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive.' 'All power is given unto Me both in heaven and in earth.' 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick.' Several considerations support my faith. I have been led in a peculiar way to pray for her. God answered my prayer in regard to——. Both Mr. P—— and myself need some remarkable answer to prayer to keep us steadfast in our adherence to God and His truth. I heard to-night that Mrs. T—— of Tirle has been so near death that they began to make arrangements for her funeral, but she is now recovering. The natural power of Christ is under the dominion of His moral power. His power is now around her, His eye is upon her. And now I again lay my case before God. I feel unwell myself, perhaps even now I am sharing her affliction.

2nd. "Mrs. P—— is better. Here again is an answer to prayer. The glory be to God. He is the same God I read of in the Bible. May He complete what He has begun."

9th. "It is not unlikely that the work of saving souls upon a large scale will often have some disgrace attached to it. But few professing Christians will cordially approve the conduct of that man who tries the utmost power of faith and prayer and effort to save men. There will be an energy and a boldness in his movements which they cannot comprehend."

"It is painful to think how little I sometimes feel for the souls of my fellow-men. Were I fully awake to their value and danger my heart would yearn with pity, and my understanding be fertile in expedients to bring them to God. O that the desire of saving souls were a master-

passion—that every capacity of my nature were subject to its sovereign sway!"—I am not sure that there was not something morbid in this feeling. I believe he felt as intense a desire for usefulness as was compatible with his physical capability to use the means for securing it. An American writer, after accounting for the retention of physical vigour by one of his countrymen extensively engaged in revival services, by stating that it was because of "a native freedom from care, and by cultivating activity rather than intensity of feeling," adds: "we all wish to have a deep sense of eternal things; but it is evident that concentrated thought and intense feeling, long continued, will just as surely derange the nervous system and destroy the health, as fire will consume wood. All the feeling on the subject of religion which we want is just enough to make us unceasingly active and vigilant in the service of the Lord. More than this we cannot endure."

"The amount of temporal happiness arising from the conversion of one soul is incalculable. It is a delightful truth that a person truly converted to God, and continuing steadfast is beyond the reach of distressing poverty."

12th. "My sermons ought to be a means of grace to myself. I must aim at a more distinct and forcible enunciation. The success of a sermon may depend much upon this; for in order to make an adequate impression the sounds should be clear and full. The voice has great influence over the mind of the speaker, as well as his mind over his voice."

"If a man rest contentedly destitute of Christian perfection he cannot be a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. *He is not likely to do much for the destruction of sin who allows it in his own breast.* A thing that appears insignificant may materially affect the usefulness of a minister. To be successful, a minister must be entirely devoted to his

work; he must be a man of one book and one aim. If he seeks to shine as a literary man, to acquire reputation as a philosopher, to attract the world by his eloquence, or even to pass for a profound divine, he misses the mark, and fails of his high calling. The work in which he is engaged must absorb his powers. The battle he has to fight with sin and Satan is so arduous that he cannot afford any of his forces to be drawn off."

He had experienced no return to vigour after the violent attack of "tic," when hemorrhage from the lungs came on, and loosened the last pin of the frail tabernacle. His soul was delightfully tranquil in the prospect of speedy dissolution. It is, shall I call it the privilege (?) of some dying Christians to look forward only—to have regret for unfaithfulness absorbed in blissful anticipation. Such was not his case. A brief record in his Journal attests that the light reflected from the eternal world brought into affecting prominence some of the transactions of the past. It evinces at the same time a noble elevation of character. I ask for it a serious consideration from my young readers, and especially from "young men of talent." March 1838. "There are some things I wish my friends to bear in mind, should it please God to take me away now. I most deeply regret that I did not give my heart to God when I was about twelve years of age. I then very much experienced the strivings of His spirit, and had I yielded, I should have shunned an infinitude of sin and disquietude; have been a blessing to my fellow-men; and have brought glory to God. My great sin has been self-idolatry. Let all young men of talent beware of it. It is most deceitful, blinding, and ruinous."—Man's estimate of this evil is widely different from that of God. It is to be feared that the poet's representation of it as an infirmity, rather than the Scripture declaration of it as a sin, is generally accepted. Many

things however wear a very different aspect to the intelligent and enlightened man who is consciously approaching eternity, from that which they presented amid the bustle of active life. Eliza Hessel felt constrained to utter an experience very similar to this of her brother's. "The greatest bane of my life" said she, "has been the love of praise." It is easy to attribute this to the action of erroneous teaching upon a debilitated frame and perhaps a morbid sensibility. But is such teaching erroneous? Is it not a sin for the creature to appropriate the credit of a possession imparted by the Creator? That is what they both felt they had sought to do, though neither of them betrayed this to an extent that appeared unusual.

His mother was sent for, but before her arrival a considerable improvement was experienced. "I have been much better since Monday, and have been able to walk about," he writes to his father on March 22nd. "The bleeding has almost ceased, but I have still a troublesome cough. I think I have the prospect of restoration. I have had scarcely any pain, and have great reason to be thankful. The Lord has wonderfully supported me in the prospect of death. The people have been peculiarly kind. I have no doubt that if God restores me my illness will be of use both to myself and others. Let us all live for eternity. Nothing in this world is comparatively worth a straw. Thank God I can tread it beneath my feet."—He ultimately recovered so as to be able to preach. The impress of death was so visible however that it was scarcely possible to resist the conviction that every effort must be his last. In vain did his friends enforce rest. While sufficient strength remained to enable him to reach the pulpit, he was bent on proclaiming the "great salvation."

On May 3rd he writes: "Have had a pleasant walk along the Eden. As I sat upon the little bridge, watching

the gurgling stream rush over its stony bed, I was filled with thankfulness to God for having cast my lot in this part. The scenery, the retirement, the circumstances, are peculiarly suited to me. If I be near my end, I recognise the Divine goodness in thus soothing my latter days. And if I am to live a little longer, I see that the circumstances amid which I have been placed are admirably adapted to prepare me for my work. Thus, whatever the issue, I have abundant reason to adore the goodness of God."

"Few things are more valuable than a certain determination of mind, which makes the best of existing circumstances. He who has attained this, instead of sinking into dispondency under failure and disappointment, and wasting his time in useless complainings, rises up with renewed energy and often recovers what is lost. Misfortune is commonly aggravated by vain regrets. A great part of mankind know not the latent strength which God has given them, almost every thing requiring a little more than wonted energy and perseverance is deemed an impossibility. *It often happens that a defeat supplies the elements of a future victory.* This is eminently the case in the moral world. How often when overcome by temptation, have we been led to gird up the loins of our mind, and watch more perseveringly, and pray more earnestly. But it is easy to throw away such advantages. Instead of putting forth every energy in order that we may prepare afresh for battle, we too often weakly allow ourselves to be disheartened, and give up all for lost. O for an invincible spirit—a determination not to be conquered! To such a soul, knowing where its strength lies, all things are possible."

"How much time is wasted in forming plans which can never be carried into operation. When we depart from the simplicity of faith we burden ourselves with a thousand needless cares. They have learnt much, who know how to live

a day at once, and calmly leave the future with God. This is the happiest mode of life, and it is the most profitable." —Young reader! this specially concerns you. The time spent in building castles in the air is worse than wasted. It begets an unpractical and romantic state of mind. Profit therefore by Mr. Hessel's experience, for this was a dictate of experience, or you will assuredly treasure up material for future regret. Live by plan, but do not employ the seed-time of life in forming visionary schemes.

On the 25th he wrote to his uncle at Howden: "Your letter has been so gratifying that I cannot forbear answering it immediately. My health is improved although I am far from well. I am a strange contradiction of strength and weakness—sometimes able to labour as if nothing ailed me, and sometimes incapable of any effort. I thank God however that I am not entirely useless, for I am still preaching both in public and in private that glorious Gospel which is my only consolation and joy.

"Since I last wrote I have stood upon the verge of eternity. God however has once more redeemed my life from the grave. I feel that I have now nothing to do in this world but to labour for the salvation of souls. If I am spared to do this, all needful things will be provided for me. I can praise God for my affliction. I trust it will prove a lasting blessing.

"You will be aware that my religious sentiments have been undergoing some change. In principle I am now a Methodist. If I know my own heart it has been the pure love of truth that has led me to this conclusion. I have experienced the power of those doctrines peculiar to the Wesleyans upon my own soul, and I have seen it exerted upon others, yea upon a whole congregation and neighbourhood, and I am perfectly satisfied. Yes, my dear uncle, my religion now makes me happy; once it did not. You

will read the language of my heart in the 189th hymn in the Wesleyan hymn book :

> "Now I have found the ground wherein
> Sure my soul's anchor may remain ;
> The wounds of Jesus, for my sin
> Before the world's foundation slain ;
> Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
> When heaven and earth are fled away."

"My engagement with the Trustees terminates at the end of June. What I shall do then I know not, but I feel assured the Lord will guide me. All who live by faith may say,

> "By thine unerring Spirit led,
> We shall not in the desert stray ;
> We shall not full direction need,
> Nor miss our providential way ;
> As far from danger as from fear,
> While love, Almighty love, is near."

"I feel obliged by your kind invitation, but see no probability of coming to Howden at present. I cannot leave my present charge. I believe a sea voyage would do me most good. If I can get a Yorkshire friend to accompany me I intend taking a trip by the lakes to Whitehaven, and thence to the Isle of Man. However, whether we meet again on earth or not, let us meet in heaven. Let us make sure work for eternity, and not stop short of the full possession and enjoyment of that religion which is 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' It is a great thing to be 'born again,' to become 'new creatures in Christ Jesus,' and yet without this glorious change we cannot enter heaven."

On June 7th he writes in his Journal : "We are not in much danger of over-rating the importance of prayer ; but in great danger of forgetting its almost unbounded power. I am sure I have received innumerable blessings in answer to it. I have no doubt that I might have received ten-fold,

yea a hundred-fold, more. *One of the greatest follies of my life has been the neglect of prayer.* When I think of the offered good I have spurned, I am overwhelmed with shame."

"Those are likely to gain most knowledge who read a few of the best books and read them well. The thoughts of some men are seminal,—they grow and produce an abundant crop. I have found it advantageous in reading some books, to extract choice sentences. This plan not only fixes good thoughts in the mind, but promotes a habit of deep and intense attention. It is not well to read after the attention is wearied. Such reading will prove injurious." —These extracts, reviewed, as they were, at intervals, familiarized his mind with some of the best thoughts of the best writers. Beyond a doubt he derived great advantage from this habit. It was by the re-perusal, however, quite as much as by the act of writing, that the advantage was secured.

8th. "We cannot attach too much importance to the word of God, whether written or exhibited in preaching. The mind and will of Jehovah is in His word, and by receiving it we receive Himself. Wherever it is believed, it works with almighty power. It gives light, creates purity, and draws all the faculties of our nature towards God. It places before the human soul objects adapted to develope its wonderful capabilities and impart to it life, warmth, sensibility, and happiness. It comes with authority. The believer feels it to be the voice of God, as certainly as he sees a tree or a plant to be the work of God. God is constantly speaking to men by His word; faith hears His voice. The word of God can transform the soul suddenly—in a moment. A single truth falling upon the soul with the brightness of divine illumination will instantly change it from darkness unto light. There is an intimate connection between the belief of God's word and salvation. The word

'is able to save the soul.' 'It is the power of God unto salvation.' Faith in the word of God must always be attended by immediate effects. Satan has necessarily, therefore, a great antipathy to the revealed volume. It is the grand instrument employed by God for the overthrow of his kingdom. It is truth from the fountain of truth; and, of course, the father of lies must hate it. Wherever it comes with power, it thwarts his malignant designs. He is sure, therefore, to do all in his power to oppose it. He will be unfavourable to the circulation of the Scriptures. He will do all he can to hinder faithful ministers of the Gospel—will tempt them to be idle, men-pleasers, &c. He will use all his influence to keep men from hearing the Gospel. One of his devices is to raise a prejudice against faithful ministers by calumny and misrepresentation. He will sometimes draw men away from the truth by false teachers. When all other plans fail, he will be present when the Gospel is preached, and use his craft and power to prevent it taking effect."

The subjoined extract is ominous:—16th, "It is only by the most strenuous efforts I can bring myself to the task of putting my thoughts upon paper. I sometimes fear that through indisposition and indolence my mind has lost something of its energy. And yet I do not see any falling off in conversation. Of late a great number of new views upon important subjects have presented themselves, and I feel desirous of having some record of them. But alas, the pen seems to exert some talismanic power, for I no sooner take it up than they are fled. Things to which in the evening I gave a clear and luminous expression in conversation, I am utterly unable to commit to writing in the morning."

The expiration of Mr. Hessel's term of agreement with the trustees of the Independent Chapel had now arrived. Such, however, had been the effect of his labours that the

greater part of his hearers were anxious for their continuance. "Before Mr. Hessel came," said a respectable inhabitant to me, "I heard scarcely anything but cursing and swearing as I sat by my fire-side on a Saturday evening, and now I can scarcely go into a house, where they are not either singing Wesley's Hymns, or ready to enter into religious conversation." Believing their desire to be the call of God's providence he consented, and they formed themselves into a Wesleyan congregation. He informed his parents of his purpose in the accompanying letter, dated July 3rd: "I have delayed writing for some time that I might give you an account of the close of my labours at the chapel in Ravenstonedale. I preached my last sermons on Sunday week. The place was crowded in the evening, and many seemed deeply affected. I hope there will be a lasting blessing.

"If my health permits I intend to labour a quarter of a year longer in this neighbourhood in connection with the Methodists. We are about engaging a room, and I hope the people will soon raise a chapel. I have little hope of good being effected at the old Meeting-house, and therefore I feel myself under obligation to do what I can to provide for the people before I leave them. There is now every prospect of spiritual prosperity. I have long been sowing seed, sometimes amid great discouragement, but now I see my labour has not been in vain.

"My health does not improve much, I am still very weak, and cannot bear study. I have had no bleeding lately. In preaching I am wonderfully supported. I am a wonder to myself and to all around me. I have lately had an impression that horse-exercise would be useful. To-day a person has kindly offered me the use of his pony. This is remarkable, for a few days ago I was led to pray that God would find me a horse as I cannot afford to buy one. I expect in a few weeks to take the horse journey through the

circuit, for the superintendent. This will be a trial of my strength.

"A gentleman from Liverpool has given me a pressing invitation to pay him a visit. The journey might do me good, but I know not how to leave at present. I wish in all things to be guided by God, and never move until I see my way clear. I find the most important consequences are often suspended upon apparently trivial events."

The little company that formed themselves into a class amounted to twelve. They were the first Methodists in that village, though several attempts to introduce Methodism had previously been made. A Wesleyan Chapel was speedily erected, and such was the liberality of the people that it was soon out of debt.

In a letter I received from him while on a visit in Yorkshire, he says: "Perhaps you will have heard I am on the Plan. The people have made a proposal that I should stay a year, and labour in the circuit as I am able. Things are going on well in Ravenstonedale. The place is far too small. Last Sunday night nearly all remained at the prayer meeting.

"I have heard Mr. ——. The sermon was very fine but I fear will do little good. I now see the vast superiority of the naked truth without any adornment. They have got a poor employment who labour to be eloquent. How important to choose the highest end, and to seek its attainment by the shortest way!"—"The more refined our taste, the more it revolts against a load of ornament," says a vigorous writer. "In children it is only the entire absence of affectation that makes us love to talk with them. And so it would be in men, if they would only profit so far as to strip themselves of their disguises. And, indeed, simplicity in a man is incomparably more lovely than in a child, for this plain reason, that by its very contrast it commends

most powerfully, and sets off most delightfully, the excellencies of an active, strong, energetic, and richly endowed intellect. The character of Gay,

'In wit a man—simplicity a child,'

endears him to our affections more than all the fables that he ever wrote." One characteristic of every sermon should unquestionably be this: that the messenger loses himself in the absorbing importance of his message. Whatever diverts attention from the message to the man, whatever prevents it from absorbing the attention, and from coming with directness and power to the conscience and heart, is mischievous. It does not follow however that pulpit-truth should be without adornment. "The masters of language do not protrude the idea meagre and bald, but introduce it, vigorous in itself, surrounded by a company of kindred thoughts. Every word has a power to evoke, from the shadows where they have slumbered, a host of images and dim recollections; and by all this host attended the main idea moves on. Knowledge is vain; of little avail profound investigation; the soundest judgment; the most subtle logic, if there be wanting a power to vivify the cumbrous mass of knowledge, to give a present reality to the past, and to abstractions a body and a shape."

The following extract will show how rapidly disease was doing its fatal work: Aug. 9th. "Have risen by three, before the sweat has come on. My soul has been drawn out in prayer. I long for entire consecration. I want to be fully delivered from the fear of death."

"I am this day twenty-four years of age," he wrote on the 16th. "I may truly say that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. God has conferred peculiar favours upon me. I am ashamed that I have so little improved them. O! if I had hearkened to His voice how much more holy, happy, and useful I should have

been."—Reader! do not dismiss this record with a cursory perusal. It comes from one who stood on the verge of eternity. No doubt he felt he had great cause to be ashamed that he had so little to exhibit as the result of twenty-four years existence. How much more, proportionately, can you show? Happy are you if you have less cause for self-reproach!

18th. "The tongue may be a powerful instrument in promoting our personal welfare. I have lately found great advantage in expressing my feelings aloud when I have been walking, or alone in the house. I have begun with some sentiment which has been suggested, and in proceeding my soul has been raised and a heavenly fire been kindled."

Increasing weakness at length compelled him to desist from stated labour, and he resolved therefore to hasten home. On the 19th he closed his labours at Ravenstonedale. He took for the text of his last sermon those solemn words of the Apostle Paul in Romans xiv. 12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." He delivered a highly impressive discourse, and so numerous were the hearers that he had to quit the pulpit and stand at the door. The many sorrowful countenances and weeping eyes made the occasion deeply mournful. Never, perhaps, was minister more beloved. There was scarcely any thing that many of them would not have sacrificed or done to prolong his stay, and now, that he is no more, his name is embalmed in their memories, and will be handed from father to son, as identified with the revival of practical godliness in that village.

He preached from the same text at Kirkby-Stephen on the following evening. The chapel was crowded. I was privileged to be one of his hearers. Never shall I forget that night. I believe there was not a tearless eye. And yet I have heard him preach much more impressively. In

fact his strength was not equal to the occasion. His prostration was such that he had to rest in the middle of the discourse. No doubt his appearance contributed largely to the effect. It seemed as if Death himself had become personified, and come to speak to mortals on the awful account they would soon have to render. No one could resist the impression that that voice was being heard there for the last time. He left Kirkby-Stephen next day, and reached home on the day following.

On the 26th he writes : "I feel it my duty to do what I can to prop this crazy tabernacle, and put forth my strength in labouring for God and the souls of men. Above all I must live in the spirit of prayer. I have proved that this is good, not only for the soul, but for the body. It strengthens the action of the heart, and quickens the stagnating fluids. Let me then give my brain and heart, as well as my limbs and body, as much labour as they can bear. Mental as well as bodily labour prepares for sleep, although in my case it must not be prolonged too near bed time."

Sep. 1st. "I want a clearer and brighter faith. I am like a man walking in a mist, or in twilight. I do not see spiritual things clearly and distinctly. Especially I have no vivid apprehension of the real state of the wicked. Hence I feel but little for them. I see them travelling to ruin without shedding a tear. It is impossible I should be useful so long as I remain in this state. The scales must fall from my eyes, and I must awake to the solemn realities of the scenes around me. This is indispensable as a preparation either for life or death."—To physical causes, beyond doubt, this state of mind was chiefly to be attributed.

On Sunday the 2nd he preached twice at Copmanthorpe, a village a few miles distant. In the morning his text was Rom. viii. 32, "He that spared not his own Son," &c. In

the evening, Heb. ii. part of v. 3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" With this momentous inquiry he closed his public labours.

On the 5th he writes: "I have been very weak to-day, but think myself better in some respects. I still come far short of complete devotion to God and my work, and am sadly entangled with bodily sense. My weakness furnishes a pretext for spending little time in prayer. Well—but I rise again. Amid all these failures I am determined to cleave to the Lord. I feel this moment strong desires for an entire consecration. I think I am willing to give up all. But O! I want to feel more for souls. Until my heart is melted with compassion for them I shall do but little good."

At the request of my brother and sister who paid him a visit, he consented to accompany them to Morley. On asking my sister to take charge of his Hymn-Book he said: "That is a precious book to me. Were I to be banished to some solitary island where I must be allowed but two books, my Bible should be one, and Wesley's Hymns the other." He then repeated these lines:

> "'Spirit of faith come down,
> Reveal the things of God;
> And make to us the *Godhead* known.'

"Did you ever read anything like that?" added he.

He had been at Morley but a few days when another indication of speedy dissolution presented itself in the failure of his voice. He returned home early in October. On the 28th or 29th he commenced a letter to me which I believe was the last occasion on which he used the pen. "I dare say you will think me a very negligent correspondent, but if you knew the state of my health you would freely excuse me. Any kind of mental effort has been extremely painful, and I have felt a reluctance to write which I cannot

express. To-day I feel better in my head, although I am weak in body. You must not expect to see me at present —that is quite out of the question."

On the Sunday before his death he was overheard at prayer. He was struggling earnestly against a momentary temptation to cling to life. "Mother," said he, on coming down stairs, "I have been trying to say from my heart: 'Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.'"

In the course of the following week he said in answer to some inquiries from his relative, the Rev. J. Bruce, "I feel like a weaned child." To several others he said: "I have no rapturous joy, but I have solid peace, solid peace." A few hours before he died, he several times repeated: "All is right." "All is right." And on his mother asking if Christ were precious, he replied with peculiar emphasis: "He is precious." "He is precious." He sank gradually. At a quarter before one on Saturday noon, November 3rd, his matured and happy spirit was taken to the bosom of its God.

"So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore.—
Life's labour done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say,
'How blest the righteous when he dies!'"

CHAPTER XIII.

Some particulars in which Mr. Hessel is commended as an example to young men: 1. In his devotedness to self-improvement—The importance attaching to the period of youth—Impressive testimony of Sir Walter Scott—A word to Parents—2. In his just and comprehensive views of what constitutes self-improvement—Sir Walter Scott on the culture of the heart—Firmness, force, and nobleness of character—Sir James Macintosh—Dr. Channing—3. In the purpose for which self-improvement was sought—4. In the means he employed to secure it—Self-improvement not to be sought too anxiously—A word to those who "have no talent"—who "have no time to read"—who "have had no education"—True greatness is accessible to all.

A DELINEATION of Mr. Hessel's character would be superfluous here. Every page of this biography has reflected some feature. His mind and heart have been laid open to inspection. And worse than superfluous would be an attempt at eulogy. This volume has not been compiled for his glorification, but for the benefit of young men, to aid and stimulate them in self-culture. It may further tend to secure this object to weave the chief threads of his mental and moral history, to gather the scattered lights of his experience into a focus. An opportunity will be afforded of exhibiting two or three features of character which only social intercourse could reveal.

The reader will have observed that I am far from exhibiting him as in every respect a model. He had his faults, and I have not concealed them. In several respects however he was well worthy of imitation. Earnestly would I urge my young readers to adopt him as an example in the following particulars:

1. In HIS DEVOTEDNESS TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT. Every

living thing is capable of growth and culture. Our Creator has clearly designed it to receive culture. What a contrast between the wild and the cultivated rose! Culture has transformed the bitter crab into the fragrant apple, and the astringent sloe into the delicious plum. The elephant, the horse, the dog, and even the sheep, have evinced considerable latent susceptibilities of education. And does man, the noblest of earth's creatures, least repay or demand culture? Compare the savage with the citizen, the rustic with the philosopher, and the fact of the desirableness and importance of thorough culture flashes before you. The achievements of commerce, science, legislation, and philanthropy, loudly proclaim the mighty capabilities with which his glorious Creator has entrusted man. And few, very few, have exhibited the full development of their capabilities. With rare exceptions, the best period for securing full development has been but partially improved. My dear young friends, your period of life is incomparably the most important. Deposit two acorns in the ground; let one have every advantage of soil, air, and protection from injury, during its first ten or twenty years, and the other be at a disadvantage in all these respects, and what a difference will be visible throughout the period of their growth! Listen then to the counsels of a friend, and cherish a deep, prayerful, purpose to make the most of the varied powers with which the Almighty has endowed you. Could those whose names you venerate or respect return from the spirit-world and express the regret they experience that they did not better employ their early opportunities, your estimate of the importance of this period of life would be greatly enhanced. Some of them recorded this sentiment ere they departed. Listen to the record of one of Britain's most popular authors—the late Sir Walter Scott. "If it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages, let such a reader remember that it is with the deepest regret that

I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth; that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance; and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science." Lodge then this truth deeply in your hearts: the present is the formative period of your whole existence. Your habits, character, and destiny, are all now in course of formation. What you do now will affect your future doings through time and eternity. If you do wrong, you will find undoing toilsome work. If negligence is the greatest crime with which you may have to charge yourselves, you will find that to be cause of unutterable self-reproach. Begin life well therefore; propose to yourself lofty aims; cherish pure sentiments; let every day augment the strength of your purposes and the success of your pursuits; and a glorious consummation will be yours. "Show me the man" says Capel Loft, "who has made the most of his faculties, and I will show you a being sublimated to the height of the angelic nature—a miracle of all perfections." The first step you have to take is to become possessed by the desire —the purpose—to make the best use of your capabilities.

Parents, let it be one of your chief aims to inspire your children with this spirit. Surely it is of the first importance that they should be early imbued with right conceptions as to whose they are, and for what they were created. Surely the acquisition of knowledge, or of accomplishments, for the sake of a subsistence, is trifling in comparison of this. You have it in your power to imbue their opening minds with these sentiments and purposes, and if you do not, can you wonder if they should practically treat them as of secondary consequence, and prove a grief instead of a joy to you, and a mischief instead

of a benefit to society? And what reason will you assign on "the great day" when charged by them with such cruel negligence?

Why do so many of the young of the present day spend their leisure in mere pleasure-seeking? and that pleasure, in many instances, of a degrading and sensual nature? Why do so many others feel a greater interest in the culture of plants, or flowers, or animals, than of themselves? Mainly because they were not better instructed by those to whom their training was intrusted by their Creator. Fathers and mothers reflect! Desirable as it is for your sons and daughters to experience gratification, it is surely transcendently more important that they should seek the improvement of their own combined nature. If you would have them to be men and women worthy of their times, their country, and their God, imbue them with an earnest desire—a governing purpose—to secure self-improvement. In this matter John Hessel is a worthy example.

2. His just and comprehensive views of what constitutes self-improvement are worthy of adoption. Many young persons, eager for improvement, largely fail in securing it through contracted or erroneous views as to what constitutes it. Acquisition of knowledge is the improvement of one part of our nature only, and not the noblest. The right view of self-improvement embraces the whole of our powers, our relationships, and our duration. This was the view Mr. Hessel took. "Endeavour to keep in view," says he, "that the cultivation of the intellect is not the end of existence—that every other faculty is given for the service of the moral faculties. Moral sensibility and power are the great objects at which I must aim." He proposed to himself universal excellence; and nothing less than this, dear reader, should be your aim. To aim at less is to inflict upon yourself an irreparable mischief.

Nor can we, without mischief, reverse the Divinely established order of procedure in pursuing this excellence. Deity puts moral excellence first; and he who puts it second will sooner or later convict himself of folly. Submit, my young friends, to the teaching of infinite wisdom in this as in every instance. Let the subjugation of passion, the rectification and purification of the heart, be ever in the front of your aims. The testimony of a man of large experience, and who made no pretensions to religion, will have more influence with some readers possibly than would that of a Christian Minister. Hear then the testimony of Sir Walter Scott: "We shall never learn to feel and respect our real calling and destiny, unless we have taught ourselves to consider everything as moonshine compared with the education of the heart." If you engrave that sentiment upon your soul, young man, it will prove of priceless value. Intercourse with the wise and good will convince you that valuable as is knowledge, and still more valuable as are a sound judgment and a reflecting mind, sterling and exalted excellence of character is incalculably the most important. Seek then to attain, "in the universal action of the soul, to conscious harmony with God and the creation, an alliance of love with all beings, a sympathy with all that is pure and happy, a surrender of every separate will and interest, a participation of the spirit and life of the universe, and entire concord of purpose" with the glorious Being who has revealed himself as Light and Love.

Cultivate *firmness* of character. Write down the two or three great principles which you feel every man ought to make his pole-star. First, that inclination shall not override judgment—that as a rational creature you will be able to render a sufficient reason for all you do. Secondly, that as evil communications corrupt good manners, your companions shall be such as will aid rather than hinder your

aspirations and purposes. Thirdly, that as God's creature you will practically recognize Him as your Master and Lord in your daily life. Having adopted these principles adhere to them. If you maintain them they will support you. You will probably be taunted by your shop-mates for being in awe of your parents and master. You had a thousand times better be taunted for that than forfeit your self-respect and arm your conscience with a sting. The early sneer your firmness may excite will soon be exchanged for respect and esteem. Dread being a fickle, purposeless, youth. If you do not, you will become "a companion of fools," and "be destroyed."

Cultivate *force* of character. You are not to infer that because possibly you are naturally wanting in courage and energy that therefore it was designed you should not possess them. If you need them—and who does not?—that need is God's voice summoning you to their acquirement. Take encouragement from John Hessel. "Fear I shall not be able to introduce the subject; I cannot overcome my reserve," is one of his earlier records. "I have seen very few of the people yet," he writes at Driffield. "I am so shy that I scarcely know how to introduce myself. I cannot yet throw off this boyishness." He lived but four years and a half after this, and who that knew him during the latter half of that time could have believed what he here states? No one could readily have imagined that "reserve," and "shyness," and "boyishness" had so recently formed part of his character. What he effected in this respect is attainable by you. If you would not be a cypher cultivate force of character. Be "not content to slip along through the world like a footman or a spy, escaping by his nimbleness and apologies as many knocks as he can, be a brave and upright man, who must find or cut a straight road to everything excellent on the earth. Not only go honourably yourself, but make it easier for all who follow you to go in

honour and with benefit." Do not however sacrifice courtesy and kindness to force. "Some men have the organ of combativeness, and seem to take pleasure in conflict. They are hard and rough, and suffer nothing in wounding others. Such firmness is often a vice. The combination of energy with sweetness is the perfection we must strive for."

Nobleness of character must be sought. Be argus-eyed to discover excellence, and in whomsoever seen appreciate, and be ready to commend, it. Let not suspected or known hostility prevent you from cordially avowing admiration of it. With what true nobility does this record stamp Sir James Macintosh! "—— has, I think, a distaste for me, which I believe to be natural to the family. I think the worse of nobody for such a feeling; indeed I often feel a distaste for myself. I am sure I should not esteem my own character in another person. *It is more likely that I should have disagreeable qualities, than that he should have an unreasonable antipathy.*" This sentiment had impressed Mr. Hessel, I judge. Several instances fell under my own observation in which, so far from indulging in malevolence toward those who betrayed unkind feeling toward him, he intimated that it was more probable there was some cause for it in him, than that it was the result of pure malignity. True nobility of soul is evinced in this record by Dr. Channing: "In conversation, let me feel that I shall gain more by candour than by victory." Discussion conducted in this spirit will issue in enlargement of view and the propagation of truth. An ignoble soul seeks to shine in the social circle, a noble one to furnish means and opportunity for others to shine. An ignoble soul renders services for the sake of securing praise or avoiding censure, a noble one from the promptings of benevolence, or from a loyal regard to the authority that appointed them. How noble of the gallant young Hodson when unjustly removed from his

Indian command to say: "I strive to do my appointed work resolutely and to the best of my ability, satisfied that there is a reason for all; and that even irksome duties well done bring their own reward, and that, if not, still they are duties." An ignoble soul exhibits palpable condescension in intercourse with inferiors, a noble one seeks to make them feel he is their brother. An ignoble soul seeks influence and power for the sake of attracting attention to himself, a noble one values them only for the good they enable him to do. With Bernard Barton he says:

"God is not great because omnipotent!
But because power in Him is understood,
And felt, and proved, to be benevolent,
And wise, and holy;—thus it ever should!
For what He wills we know is pure and good,
And has in view the happiness of all;
Hence love and adoration!—never could
The contrite spirit at His footstool fall,
If power, and power alone, its feelings did appal!

If then divinest power be truly so,
Because its proper object is to bless,
It follows, that all power which man can know,
The highest even monarchs can possess,
Displays alone their less than littleness,
Unless it seeks the happiness of man
And glory of the Highest;—nothing less
Than such a use of power one moment can
Make its possessor great, on wisdom's God-like plan."

You will observe that by character I do not mean reputation. It is not half so important to have a good reputation as to deserve it. In these days the man who deserves a good reputation sooner or later obtains it.

"Whatsoever things are true; whatsoever things are honest; whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure; whatsoever things are lovely; whatsoever things are of good report;" appropriate and exemplify. During

the last twelve months of his life especially, John Hessel did, and in this respect he deserves to be imitated.

3. THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH SELF-IMPROVEMENT WAS SOUGHT entitles him to be commended as an example. He could not but be aware that knowledge secures respect, and no doubt this operated as a powerful incentive to pursue it. But ample evidence is furnished in this volume that from the period of his conversion he was possessed by a sincere desire to benefit his fellow-men, and reflect the honour of his Divine Redeemer. I have an additional interesting record illustrative of this fact. In one of his daily walks for exercise while at College, and when only about twenty-one, he wrote this sketch in pencil: "*A useful character.* Many qualifications both mental and moral. 1. Strength of mind, arising from clear, steady, views, and calm determined energy; not depending so much upon extraneous influence as upon itself; the foundation of which it lays by clear, correct, comprehensive, reasoning. Strength adapted to every exigency, that can employ its resources against the varied forms of opposition it encounters, so that 'power may confront power;' not to be turned aside from its high purpose and aim. Strength to be felt by others—to carry with it a force and array that will stamp authority upon all its actions. Not only guide itself but direct others; and in some measure impress its own image on all around. 2. But with this strength there must be gentleness. Violence is not always an indication of power; it is often a sign of weakness. The consciousness of power will inspire calmness. In the influence gained over our fellow-men there must be nothing to irritate—to a great extent they must be unconscious of it. The master spirit alone must be on the elevation, and must silently watch the operation of its own magic spell. 3. Great command of mental stores. Every thing must be laid

under tribute, for if he acquires an extensive government of spirits he will require large resources. To those around he must supply what is defective—correct what is wrong. If he cannot make those who are shorter sighted see the objects of his aim he must set before them a nearer object in the same direction—furnish them with materials to work upon—let fall ideas into their mind—give a bias to the whole of their mental operations—cause them to act quite in a different way from what they would have done had they not come in contact with him.

"Moral elevation requisite. Mere intellectual greatness can exert but little real power. There must be honesty, truth, and integrity without a spot, kindness, and also benevolence, so as to inspire respect and invite confidence. The very perception of this elevation of character by other men gives an immense power, and imparts value to every direct effort. It arms zeal with an irresistible authority." —Is there not loftiness of purpose as well as maturity of intellect exhibited here? Notwithstanding the intensity of his thirst for knowledge, the thoroughly practical character of his mind always prevented him from becoming a mere intellectual reservoir. The desire for usefulness during the latter period of his life was absorbing. In his desire and effort to diffuse knowledge and goodness as extensively as possible, he is well worthy of being imitated.

4. THE MEANS HE EMPLOYED TO EFFECT SELF-IMPROVEMENT merit consideration. "Every thinker, writer, and speaker, ought to be apprised," says John Foster, "that *understanding* is the basis of all mental excellence." The grand requisite is vigorous and systematic thinking. Reading will yield you slight benefit except it prompts you to think. "It is my misfortune," said a late distinguished writer, "that I have read much, but have reflected little." "Readers in general who have an object beyond amusement,

are not apprised of the most important use of reading, the acquisition of power. Mere knowledge is not power; and the memory retains but a small part of the knowledge of which a book should be full. The grand object then should be to improve the strength and tone of the mind by a thinking, analysing, discriminating, manner of reading."

Unless you are willing to renounce mental sloth, and summon your entire energies to action, you cannot realize any considerable improvement. It was because John Hessel resolved to put forth his "might" that his progress was so rapid. I well remember him coming to me one day while at College, and lamenting a felt reservation of power in prosecuting his studies. "I feel," said he, "just like a lady in white gloves, who touches every thing delicately as if afraid of touching it." A few months after, he told me that this feeling was quite gone, that he could now embark his whole powers in his pursuits. "There is no want of desire on the part of most persons at this day to arrive at the result of self-culture," says Mr. Smiles, "but there is a great aversion to pay the inevitable price for it, of hard work. Dr. Johnson held that 'impatience of study was the mental disease of the present generation;' and the remark is still applicable. We may not believe that there is a royal road to learning, but we seem to believe very firmly in a 'popular' one. In education, we invent labour-saving processes, seek short-cuts to science. . . . But it will not do. All such processes are delusive." "I cannot too much impress upon your mind," says Sir Walter Scott in a letter to his son Charles, "that labour is the condition which God has imposed on us in every station of life. There is nothing worth having that can be had without it, from the bread which the peasant wins with the sweat of his brow, to the sports by which the rich man must get rid of his ennui." It was a saying of Sir Joshua Reynolds, "nothing is denied to well-directed

labour; nothing is to be obtained without it." Sir Fowell Buxton says in a letter to Joseph John Gurney: "I hold a doctrine to which I owe—not much indeed, but all the little success I ever had—namely, that with ordinary talents and extraordinary perseverance all things are attainable." Discipline your mind to toil, young reader, as John Hessel did, and your labour shall not be in vain.

He was solicitous to get a just view of the relations of things, so as to be able rightly to estimate their relative importance. An Antipœdo-baptist friend once expressed surprise that he did not see immersion to be the only scriptural mode of baptism, and that the ordinance was designed to be restricted to adults. He replied, "I have several much more important subjects to investigate before I can formally examine that. It will come in its turn."

He delighted to trace facts to their principles, and to discover the general laws which pervade nature and society. He found this to be the really royal road to self-improvement. "It signifies nothing," says the author of Self-Formation, "to know that gold is gold; or iron, iron; unless we have a notion of the connexions and dependencies of these things on others. People of intellectual experience are, of course, well aware of this. They know they can gain little or nothing by laying up a load of facts in the memory, unless they refer those facts to principles, and generalize them more or less exactly, into systems." He believed that "intellectual culture consists, not chiefly, as many are apt to think, in accumulating information, though this is important, but in building up a force of thought, which may be turned at will on any subjects on which we are called to pass judgment. This force is manifested in the concentration of the attention, in accurate penetrating observation; in reducing conplex subjects to their elements; in diving beneath the effect to the cause; in detecting the

more subtle differences and resemblances of things; in reading the future in the present; and especially, in rising from particular facts to general laws, or universal truths. This last exertion of the intellect, its rising to broad views and great principles, constitutes what is called the philosophical mind, and is especially worthy of culture. What it means your own observation must have taught you. You must have taken note of two classes of men, the one always employed on details, on particular facts; and the other using these facts as foundations of higher, wider truths. The latter are philosophers. One man reads a history, and can tell you all its events, and there stops; another combines these events, brings them under one view, and learns the great causes which are at work on this or another nation, and what are its great tendencies. So one man talks continually about the particular actions of this or another neighbour; whilst another looks beyond the acts to the inward principle from which they spring, and gathers from them larger views of human nature. In a word, one man sees all things apart and in fragments; whilst another strives to discover the harmony, connexion, unity of all." He habitually referred sentiments to the test of principles he held to be settled. Hence he rejected as false many of the notions current in society. A friend once said to him, speaking of a clergyman whose ministry was not evangelical, that such preachers, he believed, did more harm than good. "I don't know that," replied he, "it would go counter to an important principle, and teach that a little good is a greater evil than none at all."

He sought a thorough acquaintance with human nature. Abbot has a passage in his Corner Stone, which, had it appeared in the narrative instead of the didactic form, would have been eminently applicable to him: "Be careful to make every experiment and effort a means of

increasing your stock of knowledge of the human mind, and of its tendencies and movements in respect to religious feeling. Watch the operation of causes and the nature of effects. Look into the Bible for a standard of religious duty, and for correct views of the nature and obligation of God's laws; and then look in the wide field of action and character which is developing itself all around you, and seek practical knowledge of men there. When you fail of producing a desired effect, investigate the cause of your failure; when causes from which you would have looked for one result produce a different or a contrary one, examine the cause and ascertain the difficulty. When success attends your efforts, analyse them with care to discover what were the essential conditions of success." Without any further object than experimenting on human nature, and possibly enjoying a little innocent sport, once, when in company with a young lady with whom he was familiar, and whom he knew to be fastidious about stating her age, he set himself to elicit that fact. He artfully turned the conversation so as to enable him to state the day of the month, and of the week, on which he was born. She unsuspectingly made a similar statement. This was just what he desired, for with this data he readily ascertained the year of her birth. He afterwards informed her that he was in possession of the great secret, and to her no small surprise and chagrin, how he had come by it.

Conversation he regarded as an important means of self-improvement. "It relieves the mind," says he, "gives a new tone to its energies, and prepares it for new exertion. It gives one a more complete command over our intellectual resources." "Subjects of which I gain but an indistinct conception when alone," he once said to me, "will generally unfold themselves as soon as I begin to talk about them."

His pen proved a powerful auxiliary to his advancement.

In the early part of his studious career he extracted extensively. To the end of life he journalized. He scarcely had a thought he deemed worth preserving which he did not insert in his journal. He practised writing until it became quite a pleasurable exercise. Of the immense benefit resulting from the practice he became increasingly convinced. It converted his mental materials into a definite shape, and enabled him to ascertain their extent. It preserved him from resting contented with half-formed notions of a subject. It rendered his resources available. It called his reflecting faculties into powerful activity, and invigorated them. It improved both the matter and style of his conversation. It created a demand for information, and caused it to be seized with avidity. Of the truth of this any one may soon satisfy himself. Let any man write for an hour or two, and he will find that his mental appetite has been sharpened, and it will readily digest appropriate nourishment.—It tended to the formation of good mental habits. It greatly improved his powers of observation. It caused a vast fund of information to be collected which was both portable and readily inspected.

Self-improvement is largely dependent on memory. Mr. Hessel cordially subscribed to the beautifully-expressed sentiment of the late Mr. Jay: "Memory, like a friend, loves to be trusted, and rewards confidence." He was convinced that distinctness and depth of impression materially contributed to retentiveness. In reading, the size and clearness of the type had much to do, in his opinion, with the production of such an impression, and he therefore preferred a book with good type and good paper. On this principle, and also because he believed that extensive practice in it injured the style, he abandoned the use of short-hand, after having acquired great proficiency in reading as well as writing it. To enable him to recal beautiful scenes in nature, he would close his eyes after

having gazed upon them for a while, and employ himself in painting them upon memory's canvass.

Such were the chief means employed for mental culture. Many, it is to be feared, employ the means of moral culture heedless of results. Not so was it with Mr. Hessel. Means were to him a ladder only.

The affections are the moulding power of our character. Ascertain what a man loves and hates, and the intensity of his love and hatred, his moral nature is then revealed. As is the worthiness of the object of our love, so is our excellence. The highest excellence can be secured only by love to the Highest Being. Mr. Hessel's history forcibly illustrates this truth. In the vicarious sufferings and death of Christ he saw an expression of the Divine holiness and justice which inspired the profoundest awe, and a manifestation of God's love to man which kindled the intensest admiration, gratitude, and love.

Necessary as he believed public worship, private prayer, and Bible-study to be, he attached scarcely less importance to *meditation*. He would have said with Dr. Channing, "Reverie was once the hectic of my soul; meditation has been its life." "Real action," it has been well observed "is in silent moments. The epochs of our life are not in the visible facts of our choice of a calling, our marriage, our acquisition of an office, and the like, but in a silent thought by the way-side as we walk; in a thought which revises our entire manner of life, and says: 'Thus hast thou done, but it were better thus.' . . . This revisal or correction is a constant force, which, as a tendency, reaches through our life-time." He who by meditation gets his soul penetrated with a sense of the all-pervading presence of his Lord, his Father, and his Judge, feels, even in the bustling city, that an emancipating and elevating force is constantly at work within him.

While urgently enforcing the diligent use of means of

moral culture, I fully concur in this utterance of a valuable writer. "The moral nature is fed by right action amidst present duties, rather than by direct efforts exerted on the character. Improvement is less promoted by constant self-watching, than by a generous pouring forth of our minds and hearts on grand objects. Great men are produced by great ends. . . . We improve without intending, without knowing it, by mere intercourse with great minds. Perhaps direct effort is chiefly important as preparing us for these more gently pervading influences. The best growth is that which we do not rigidly determine."

I must not terminate my remarks without a few words of reply to some current objections. Many a youth finds a quietus to the perturbations excited by the stimulating appeals of some lecturer, in the off-handed soliloquy "I have no talent." Unquestionably a great difference exists in men's capacity for mental improvement, but great improvement is attainable by every man. John Hessel exhibited no remarkable superiority at twenty-one. Here are declarations from his own pen after he entered College. "Greek this afternoon. Very difficult. But I find I must not be afraid of labour." "I doubt very much whether I shall ever arrive at any thing like excellence. I have not patience for severe and continuous study. I would fain attain the end without the means." Composition became quite a pleasurable exercise and he attained to great facility in it; at this period, however, he writes: "I feel a great reluctance to composition." "I have an unconquerable reluctance to write." Had it not been for his invincible determination to make the best use of his powers, he would have descended to the oblivion which annually entombs so many.

This determination was not maintained without many a struggle, and involved what was for some time felt to be

irksome toil. But the moment application became a habit, irksomeness was transformed into delight. And so will it be in your case. Persevere in your battle against sloth and fickleness, and the taxing of your powers will soon prove a pleasurable excitement. The severer your struggle, the more joyous your victory. "The longer I live," says Sir Fowell Buxton, "the more I am certain that *the great difference between men, between the feeble and the powerful, the great and insignificant, is* ENERGY—INVINCIBLE DETERMINATION—a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. THAT QUALITY WILL DO ANYTHING THAT CAN BE DONE IN THIS WORLD; *and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature* A MAN without it."

Know, my young friend, that the plea "I have no talent" is understood to mean: "I have no disposition; I care nothing about improvement." This is a feature of ill-omen in a young man. It betrays the want of moral principle, and marks him as the tempting prey of bad associates.

Do not conclude that because you cannot learn many things you can learn nothing. Apply yourself resolutely to the mastery of some one pursuit. It matters comparatively little how slow your progress. Thoroughness with slowness is better than rapidity with superficialness. "Time and patience change the mulberry leaf to satin." Lord St. Leonards has thus explained the secret of his success: "I resolved when beginning to read law, to make everything I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week; but at the end of twelve months my knowledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided from recollection."

"I have no time" is a more common plea for negligence.

"An earnest purpose finds time or makes it" says Capel Loft. William Chambers of Edinburgh has exemplified this. "My education" says he, "was that which is supplied at the humble parish school of Scotland; and it was only when I went to Edinburgh, a poor boy, that I devoted my evenings, after the labours of the day, to the cultivation of that intellect which the Almighty has given me. From seven or eight in the morning till nine or ten at night, was I at my business as a bookseller's apprentice, and it was only during hours after these, stolen from sleep, that I could devote myself to study. I assure you that I did not read novels; my attention was devoted to physical science and other useful matters. During that period I taught myself French." Mark what he adds: "I look back to those times with great pleasure, and am almost sorry I have not to go through the same troubles again. *I reaped more pleasure when I had not a sixpence in my pocket, studying in a garret in Edinburgh, than I now find when sitting amidst all the elegancies and comforts of a parlour.*" Physical toil for ten or twelve hours a day, if not exhausting, does not incapacitate for two or three hours of mental exertion. And "an hour a day, if profitably employed, would enable any man of ordinary capacity," says Mr. Smiles, "to master a complete science very shortly. It would make an ignorant man well-informed in ten years."

Attention to two things, practicable to the busiest man, will infallibly secure improvement. One of these is *reading*. Avoid light reading; of newspapers and periodicals read little. "Few have been sufficiently sensible of the importance of that economy in reading," says John Foster, "which selects, almost exclusively, the very first order of books. Why should a man, except for some special reason, read a very inferior book at the time that he might be reading one of the highest order." The other is *observation*. Be a keen observer. Inquire into the properties and uses

of things, the causes and results of events. You will thus secure far more knowledge than many great readers, and what is of greater consequence, you will have acquired vigour and expansiveness of mind.

But these pages may possibly fall under the eye of one who has "had no advantages of education." Such was the case with many of those men whose names are now household words. Samuel Drew, Professor Lee, Professor Faraday, Sir Humphrey Davy, and Sir John Hunter, with many others, laboured under this disadvantage. This is not so great a calamity as you are tempted to think. What avails school-education if not followed by self-culture? School-education "is mainly valuable in so far as it trains us in the habit of continuous application, and enables us to educate ourselves after a definite plan and system." You need only an indomitable purpose in order to success. "Edmund Stone said to the Duke of Argyle, in answer to his grace's inquiry, how he, a poor gardener's boy, had contrived to read Newton's Principia in Latin, 'one needs only to know the twenty-four letters of the alphabet in order to learn everything else that one wishes.'"

Though I dare not promise every reader intellectual eminence, moral eminence is universally accessible. Every day you have opportunity, by courageously encountering difficulty, cheerfully submitting to disappointment, meekly enduring provocation, and generously aiding the timid, the feeble, the ignorant, or the sorrowing, of acquiring those virtues which are our brightest ornament and richest treasure. The truly great man is not he who has conquered a city but conquered himself, and acquired the power to conquer the prejudices and passions of others. He in whose heart the love of God and man is enthroned, is possessed of the power incomparably most to be envied—

the power to be happy in all conditions, and useful to all classes. He carries into futurity seeds of blessedness, which planted in a richer soul, and favoured with a more genial atmosphere, shall flourish immeasurably and eternally. Covet, young man, covet earnestly, all excellence, but be bent on possessing the highest.

"The world wants MEN—large-hearted, manly men—
Men who shall join its chorus, and prolong
The psalm of labour and the psalm of love.

The times want SCHOLARS—scholars who shall shape
The doubtful destinies of dubious years;
And land the ark that bears our country's good
Safe on some peaceful Ararat at last.

The age wants HEROES—heroes who shall dare
To struggle in the solid ranks of Truth;
To clutch the monster Error by the throat;
To bear opinion to a loftier seat;
To blot the era of Oppression out,
And lead a universal Freedom in.

And heaven wants SOULS—fresh and capacious souls,
To taste its raptures, and expand, like flowers,
Beneath the glory of its Central Sun;
It wants fresh souls—not lean and shrivelled ones;
It wants fresh souls, my brother—give it thine.

If thou, indeed, wilt act as man should act;
If thou, indeed, wilt be what scholars should;
If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive
To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,
Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;
Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts—
Each single heart with myriad raptures filled—
While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings
Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

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